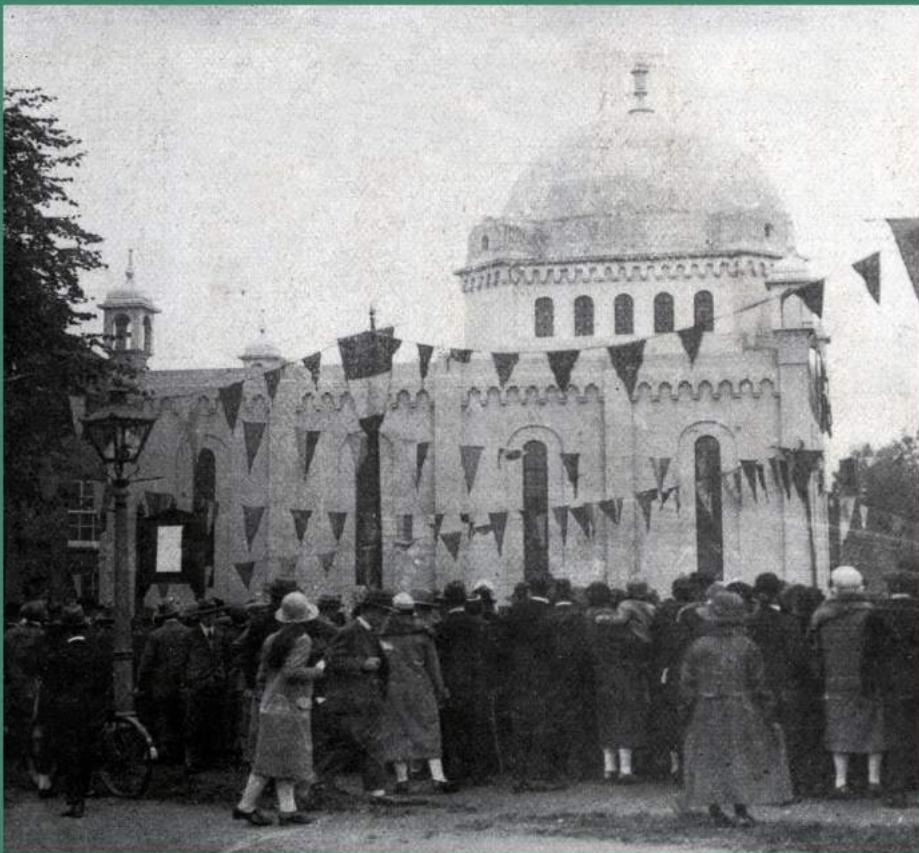


Islam and Britain

Muslim Mission in an Age of Empire

Ron Geaves



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Note on Quotations and Spelling

Following the conventions of anthropological fieldwork, wherever possible, Arabic or Urdu terminology does not use diacritics. There are exceptions. Quoting from sources, I have followed the spelling used in the quotation or citation. Thus it is possible for the same terms to be spelled differently throughout the book. Titles of works that are transliterated from Urdu precisely follow the variant used in the original.

Abbreviations

AOS	Anglo-Ottoman Society
BMS	British Muslim Society
LMI	Liverpool Muslim Institute
LMM	London Muslim Mission
MLS	Muslim Literary Society
WMM	Woking Muslim Mission
YEIS	Young England Islamic Society

Introduction

In recent years some of the chroniclers of the Muslim presence in Britain have turned their attention to the earlier history, moving away from the post-World War II migrations and their descendants to the attempts to establish Islam in Britain in the age of Empire.¹ Other historians have explored the dynamics of British and Muslim relations within the context of global contacts between empires² and even prior to the rise of the British naval and mercantile power that led to the dramatic change in the power balance between Europe and the Muslim world.³ Some have focused on South Asian contacts with Britain, examining explorers, students, politicians, ambassadors, seamen and others who increasingly arrived in Britain throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and earlier.⁴

There has also been an interest in biographies of early converts to Islam who were able to make their mark on the fledgling presence of Muslims in Britain, creating discourses on the role of Islam in British history, the various possibilities of what Islam might look like in a British milieu and ultimately who had the authority to speak for Islam.⁵ In all these challenges, a question arose about the authenticity of the Islam that was promulgated. This book, by focusing on a particular missionary effort that took place in London and elsewhere between 1912 and 1939, provides one more brick in the wall of the scholastic endeavour mentioned earlier. It arose out of my own interest in the period and charts the early attempts by Muslims from India to promote Islam in Britain from 1905, and the arrival of the first missionaries to England in 1912, documenting their progress with the establishment of interwar communities that developed primarily in London and utilized the facilities offered initially by the presence of the Shah Jehan mosque in Woking that had existed since 1893. These missionaries belonged to the Ahmadiyya movement and, as such, were a fulfilment of an Islamic messianic quest to engage with the British in India and in Britain, but more widely to locate a new formation of the Prophetic message of Muhammad in the West and throughout the world.

Humayun Ansari makes the important point that, so far, the ‘settlement histories of those Muslim communities in Britain which subscribe to non-Sunni traditions’ have been neglected.⁶ He notes that this is because of the dominance of ‘South Asian Sunni-dominated Islam’ and goes on to make the pertinent comment that this has resulted in a failure to understand how the experience of institutionalizing Islam in Britain is diverse and has been influenced by ‘a range of historical, social, cultural and theological factors’.⁷ Ansari particularly mentions the Shi'a sects and the Ahmadis. This work argues that the Ahmadis made an immense contribution in the creation of an organized Islamic presence in Britain from 1912 until the outbreak of war in 1939.

Some historians of Islam in Britain and Western Europe have already contributed to our knowledge of these Ahmadiyya networks and their significance to the arrival of Islam in the West. In particular, they have noted that the Ahmadiyya were able to avoid the increasing sectarianism of South Asian Islam when preaching to Western converts and even, to a lesser degree, Indian Muslims in London. Ansari observes that in the Woking (Shah Jehan) and London mosques (al-Fazl) all were welcome, and it was not unusual to receive visitors from all the strands of Islam, thus the Aga Khan, Jinnah, Amir Faisal and the leader of the Khilafat movement were all treated with equal respect.⁸ Clayer and Germain focus on the transnational connections being made by British and European Muslims during the interwar period. They note that Britain hosted around 10,000 to 20,000 foreign Muslims and several hundred converts. By 1931, France had more than 100,000 Muslims. There were also Muslim populations in Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland and further east, magnified by the historical influence of the Ottomans. Ahmadiyya missionaries were active in most of these places, used London as the centre for such outreach activity and created Europe-wide networks, giving lectures and providing support to local Muslim populations.⁹ Gilham provides detailed insights into the role the Ahmadiyya played in the process of conversion to Islam between 1912 and 1950.¹⁰ They were crucial in organizing Islam in Britain, only to be eventually submerged within the large-scale South Asian economic migration that occurred after World War II and the subsequent British-born generations that came to prominence in the final decades of the twentieth century. This new contribution acknowledges the work of these previous researchers, supplying the detailed narrative to support their assertions.

After the publication of my book *Islam in Victorian Britain: The Life and Times of Abdullah Quilliam* in 2010, representatives of the Ahmadiyya in Britain were curious to know more about Quilliam’s contacts with their missionaries between

1913 and his death in 1935. These contacts with Quilliam and other prominent British converts of the period were substantial and begged the question as to whether these individuals were openly sympathetic to the Ahmadiyya message or, indeed, active and conscious converts to the movement. My view was that sectarian divisions within the Islamic world were played down or even ignored by both the British converts and foreign Muslims in London in the interests of establishing Islam in Britain and enabling a relatively small band of people to fraternize and provide support to each other.

I accepted the invitation by the Ahmadiyya to tell their part of this important period of British Muslim history, aware that there were significant gaps concerning their influence on the early development of Islam in Britain, in spite of the publications mentioned earlier and the small number of academic publications on the history of the Ahmadiyya.¹¹ I was given access to diaries, reports and letters of the Ahmadiyya missionaries in Britain, often written to show progress to their leaders in India, and then published as newspaper and journal accounts of their activities. The Ahmadiyya journal, *The Review of Religions*, was first published in English in 1905 from Qadian in the Punjab, the original home of the movement, and reveals their strategic vision towards the Western world. It provided a treasure trove of resources, as it was intentionally published with the aim of promoting Islam to an English-speaking readership. The journal came out monthly and could not keep pace with the Urdu-language newspaper *Al-Fazl*, which appeared weekly, and sometimes more frequently. The newspaper reproduced most of the letters from the missionaries with a time lag of around one month to accommodate mail from London to India by sea. These Ahmadiyya resources could be cross-referenced to the letters and writings of prominent Victorian and Edwardian converts, British and Indian newspapers, the National Archives of the United Kingdom and other archives belonging to various contemporary religious movements, for example, the Woking Muslim Mission (WMM) and Christian missionary sources. All of this was supported by a small but significant body of academic literature and Ahmadiyya publications maintained by their history department. Many of these documents were kept in Rabwah, Pakistan, and were written in Urdu. Since the Ahmadiyya were to divide into two movements during the period under investigation, possibly even influenced by different strategies of mission, the Lahori branch's records of the period were also explored. Additionally, interviews were undertaken with the historians of the movement in Qadian and Rabwah.

The reliance on Ahmadiyya resources raises the question of reliability. Wherever possible, the sources were checked against other writings of the

period, particularly those of the converts or mainstream media accounts. I have also taken the view that the writings of the missionaries do not appear to be exaggerated. Their accounts of conditions in London and their efforts to attract converts display the difficulties they faced, and the successes do not appear to be exaggerated in their portrayal. They were writing to an audience in India that waited expectantly for news, and there is a sense of history in the making that requires accuracy.

I have placed the origins of the Ahmadiyya within the background of the history of Islam in India, the unique manifestations of the religion in that region (especially after the decline of Muslim power) and the rise of European power in the East, most notably the British imperial presence. The context, therefore, is the resulting globalization created by the expansion of British power, the developing technologies of communication and the linking of the British colonies and their populations to the centres of power in London and the commercial ports of Liverpool, Cardiff and Tyneside. In addition to India, other British colonies in Asia and Africa brought an estimated 100 million Muslims under the sovereignty of the British crown, resulting in issues of loyalty and citizenship for those colonized, especially with regard to British foreign policy towards the Muslim world.¹² This was acutely felt by British converts to Islam. By the early twentieth century, Britain had spread its domination into the Persian Gulf, and since the construction of the Suez Canal, opened in 1869, it acquired vast Muslim territories in the Middle East and Africa. In 1882 it occupied Egypt and then created an Anglo-Egyptian condominium over Sudan in 1898; in East Africa it shared Zanzibar and Somaliland with other European powers and acquired the key port of Aden on the Arabian Peninsula. In its African colony of Nigeria, Britain swallowed the Muslim Sultanate of Sokoto. In the Far East, control over the sultans of the Malay states was established. The Ottoman Empire, the only remaining significant centre of Muslim power, lost ground steadily throughout the nineteenth century and was finally defeated and dissolved at the end of World War I, sharing out its Arab territories between Britain and France. By 1919 only Afghanistan, the Yemen (excluding Aden) and Hejaz and Nedj on the Arabian Peninsula retained any semblance of independence. This expansion helped to create small enclaves of Muslims in Britain itself, which were to feel the impact of such global transformation as crises of identity that would challenge the way they constructed faith.

The loss of India had been felt strongly by Indian Muslims. By 1818 Britain was recognized as the de facto power in India, leading to a crisis of confidence and soul-searching among Muslims that would place Islam itself in the spotlight.

This was echoed by Muslims across the globe, wherever they had to come to terms with the power of the European imperial states. This loss of confidence would result in various types of reform and revival of Islam being instituted throughout the Muslim world. The contents of this book will be focused only on those in India, as they provide the background to the Islamic missionary activity in London during the peak of the imperial enterprise. The missionary activity has to be seen in the wider context of these dramatic changes in the world order.

For many devout Muslims, this loss of power was intolerable, as it appeared to challenge the perceived dominion of the holders of the final revelation over the world, the end of 1,000 years of civilizations founded upon the Islamic revival of the Abrahamic faiths, and was seen to offer stewardship of the world's destiny back to the Christian powers of the West.

This dramatic change in the fortunes of Indian Islam complicated the already existing fault lines that historically arose from the attempts to establish a religion that was uniquely Indian, rather than the Arab version of the faith. India was an ancient civilization with its own deep philosophical, theosophical and theological understandings of the One and the many. Islamic thought impacted upon this already existing ancient wisdom, creating its own fusions, but so did the older religions of the East affect Muslims in their understandings of *tawhid* (unity of God). I will argue that the Ahmadiyya response arose out of the crisis that came from the loss of Muslim power, but also from the continuous ebb and flow between a proclaimed orthodoxy based on the Arab model and a unique brand of Islam that could be owned by Indian Muslims.

Nile Green alerts us to the fact that the history of Islam in India has been 'imprinted with both the act and the imaginary of migration'.¹³ Green reminds us that India has never been a fully Islamic society in the sense that a Middle Eastern Muslim-majority nation can be, despite the presence of historic and powerful Muslim empires that ruled over the subcontinent for centuries. Muslims in India would always be engaged in the symbolic, political, religious and cultural act of 'making space' in a territory that would remain predominantly Hindu in spite of invasion and conquest. Muslim sacred space would have to be sculpted out of an existing terrain that had been regarded as sacred by Hindus for millennia. Consequently, indigenous attempts by Muslims to create their own sacred spaces, holy men and women, religious texts, cultural products such as art, music and architecture, and political structures able to sustain Muslim rule over all Indians became deeply symbolic representations of the act of migration and a way of suppressing the reality that Muslims in India were only a minority of the population. Islam in India, in spite of the presence of a self-labelled Islamic

orthodoxy, and indeed, arguably, the sustenance for such an interpretation of Islam, would integrate and assimilate with local cultures to produce an extraordinary fusion that would, in an atmosphere of creative tension, produce a culture in northern and central India that would survive, at least until the threats of communalism challenged its very foundations in the twentieth century, when India became an independent nation and Pakistan and Bangladesh were carved out as Muslim states.

In this context the narrative associated with India's first mosque is revealing. Known as Cheraman Juma Masjid, the legend claims that it was built in 629 AD by Malik Bin Dinar. Acknowledging that the Arab world had trade contacts with the Keralan coast from very early times, it is believed that a Chera king, Cheraman Perumal of Kodungallure, left for Mecca, where he converted to Islam and changed his name to Thajud'din. It is claimed that he married the sister of the King of Jeddah. On his return trip, he was accompanied by Malik-ibn-Dinar and other Muslim religious leaders. On the way, Thajud'din fell sick and died, but not before he had given letters of introduction for the reigning king (Musiris) in Kodungallur, the Chera capital. The king treated the guests with respect and permitted them to establish Islam in his territory. The mosque was built at Kodungallur, by converting an Arathali Hindu temple.¹⁴ The mosque website claims that Cheraman Perumal even met with Muhammad in Makkah and that the tombs in the mosque belong to Habib Bin Malik and his wife, who was appointed ghazi of the mosque after Malik-ibn-Dinar returned to Medina. The legend is embellished with a story of a dream by the ruler of Kerala in which the new moon was split into two halves at the horizon. A group of Arab traders on their way to Sri Lanka met the king and interpreted it to mean that his dream was a reference to the miracle that the Prophet performed in Arabia.¹⁵ The mosque is believed to be only the second one in the whole Muslim world to perform Juma prayers.¹⁶ The hagiographical narrative presented as history would seem to confirm Green's analysis of the 'act and imaginary of migration' in which India is claimed as an original location of Islam, predating even the expansion of the Arab empire after Muhammad's death.

The confidence of the Mughal Empire would lead to an Indo-Islamic synthesis that would give Muslim culture in India uniqueness not found elsewhere. In some ways the fusion demonstrated the ability of Muslims to adapt the Arab religious revolution into new forms mixing creatively with conquered civilizations, first Persian, then Turkic, and then these two expressions finding their way into the Indian domain. However, India would offer the unique possibility of Islamic expression rendered by Muslim rule always being a minority in the face

of a Hindu majority. This factor could lead to liberal creative fusions in architecture, cuisine, language, poetry, painting and religion, but it could also lead to a narrowing down to a reactive or defensive orthodoxy rallying around the cry of 'Islam in danger'.

The decline and eventual loss of the Mughal Empire would lead to the cry of 'Islam in danger' re-emerging from those who perceived themselves as the guardians of religion. However, the solution to the threat to the religion was diverse, and in some ways determined the various factions that arose in subcontinent Islam during the nineteenth century. Reformers of various hues emerged in the period following the loss of Muslim power, ranging from jihadists to modernists; although some were to advocate orthodoxy or tradition, others sought revival and renewal by integrating the best that British education had to offer.

All of this has to be taken into account in the examination of Ahmadiyya origins, but it must be remembered that the founder of the movement was a Punjabi Muslim. The story of the Punjab and its religious life; which group or person was guilty of acts of injustice or persecution, who gained and who lost depends much upon who is telling the story. If the most definitive account belongs to the victors, then arguably the Sikh version becomes normative, but it should be remembered that the Muslims of the Punjab had the most to lose, and it is perhaps here in the north-west corner of Hindustan that Muslim feelings of loss were most keenly felt. The Hindu/Buddhist territories of the Punjab were, along with Sindh, among the earliest to be occupied by Muslim forces, dating back as far as the Umayyad invasion by Muhammad bin Qasim in 711 AD. As particular events in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Punjab are significant for the early development of Islamic *da'wa* (mission) in Edwardian Britain, it is necessary to understand how the Muslim history of the Punjab may have differed from the remainder of India.

In writing this book, I wished to draw upon the experience gained when I wrote the history of Abdullah Quilliam in 2010.¹⁷ It was clear that the book was of great interest to British Muslims and their media, in addition to the usual academic readership, and so I set out to cross the boundaries of 'neutral' scholarship into community advocacy. I wrote the book primarily for a Muslim readership. This new work has the potential to generate more controversy. It will be welcomed in some circles but could disorient readers of other Muslim religious groupings. I have found over the years that, in all my efforts to present my writings back to both a Muslim and an academic audience, the border between 'neutral' scholarly aims and objectives and my subjective perception of the world has increasingly blurred.¹⁸ I confess that it is my wish that the Ahmadiyya

be recognized for their significant role in the history of Islam in Britain. My stance on the Ahmadiyya truth claims is straightforward. Methodologically, I am concerned with the theology that claims divine authority for the founder of the movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed (1835–1908), only insofar as it impacts the formation of Islam in the period under observation. I am, of course, aware that it is a contentious claim that has already divided the Ahmadiyya community and led to claims of heresy from the wider Muslim world. However, the issue of truth claims belonging to a confessional religious movement is not a new methodological challenge for scholars of religion.

In writing the biography of Abdullah Quilliam, I became aware of a small band of Victorian and Edwardian converts who shaped the appearance of Islam in Britain until well after World War I, but whose influence had declined by the beginning of World War II. Along with Abdullah Quilliam, then known as Henri de Léon, these upper-middle-class men and women had emerged as prominent figures in London from 1910 and created a new leadership of Muslims inspired by the Ahmadiyya missionary presence from 1912 in London and Woking. Here they were joined by significant new converts and Muslim visitors to Britain to form a unique band of men and women who created the epicentre of Islamic mission after the decline of the Liverpool community in 1908, when Abdullah Quilliam had made his dramatic exit to Constantinople. This early Muslim presence was to virtually disappear from academic sight after the large-scale migration of South Asian Muslims post–World War II. Not surprisingly, the majority of scholarship and journalism has focused almost exclusively on postwar developments, especially after media-worthy events such as the publication of *The Satanic Verses* and the rise of militant extremism, leading to the events of 9/11 in the United States and 7/7 in Britain. Indeed, my own career as a writer and researcher was to concentrate almost exclusively on events in Britain after the publication of *The Satanic Verses*. It was not until my move from Chester University to Liverpool Hope University in 2007 that I became excited by the prospect of exploring one of the oldest Muslim communities in Britain, centred in the city of Liverpool and dating back to the late 1880s.

The publication of that book in 2010 charting this Islamic missionary endeavour in Liverpool was to generate considerable interest from second- and third-generation Muslims in England who responded to Abdullah Quilliam and his endeavours to cement Islam in Britain as an indigenous faith rather than a foreign import. They have turned the convert Liverpool lawyer into an iconic figure who demonstrates that Islam has far older roots in the new land that their parents and grandparents had adopted. The psychological impact of a Muslim

presence – a mosque functioning as an international mission centre in the heart of the empire, several hundred converts, two schools, an orphanage, a weekly newspaper distributed to more than eighty Muslim nations and the intention to create an Islam worthy of Britain and able to function in British culture as a native plant – appeared to strike a deeper chord with the British-born generations of Muslims than the efforts of their own parents and grandparents to create the postwar infrastructures of Islam in certain cities and towns. Quilliam's community spoke volumes to British Muslims as they attempted to engage with the sometimes thorny issue of ethnicity and family background, Islamic commitment and loyalty to a non-Muslim nation state.

But the early presence of Muslims in Britain is more than an account of early attempts to establish Islam by converts. As shown so thoroughly by Rozina Visram in her pioneering work *Asians in Britain: 400 Years of History*, the story cannot be divorced from empire and the colonial venture.¹⁹ The interaction of South Asian Muslims with the British did not begin with the arrival of Muslims in Britain in the second half of the twentieth century, but rather in attempts to deal with the loss of Mughal power in India and subsequent reformations of Islam, and attempts to engage with the militant zeal of the myriad Christian missionaries who arrived with the British Raj. Early Muslim mission in Britain after Abdullah Quilliam has to be seen in the context of this encounter between two religions, one losing its imperial power and the other rejoicing in the apparent rise of Christendom.

Research into these early Indian missionary endeavours permitted the possibility of adding to the literature on Islamic missiology and the wider study of religions, where the question of what happens to a religion when it leaves its place of origin has been of interest, at least since the arrival of Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Jainism and other forms of Christianity from the Caribbean Islands has transformed the religious and cultural landscape of Britain. There are a small number of books on conversion, but missiology in Islam has not developed as a discipline to the degree that it has in Christianity. As Sir Thomas Arnold (1864–1930), in one of the classic texts on Islamic missiology first published in 1895, reminded us:

But since the zeal of proselytising is a distinct feature of either faith, its missionary history may fittingly be singled out as a separate branch of study, not as excluding other manifestations of the religious life but as concentrating attention on an aspect of it that has special characteristics of its own.²⁰

The popular understanding that Islam was spread by the sword remains robust in certain circles, but as Arnold pointed out, Christianity and Islam have seen

individuals and movements that have engaged in the mission to expand territory both geographically and culturally. Arnold provides a timely reminder that both religions also spread through the activities of pious individuals who may have had little to do with political processes, or may even have been in opposition to the powerful or religious orthodoxy.

Both in Christianity and Islam there have been at all times earnest souls to whom their religion has been the supreme reality of their lives, and this absorbing interest in matters of the spirit has found expression in that zeal for the communication of cherished truths and for the domination of doctrines and systems they have deemed perfect, which constitutes the vivifying force of missionary movements, – and there have likewise been those without the pale, who have responded to their appeal and have embraced the new faith with a like fervour.²¹

There are Orientalists who have maintained the incompatibility of Islam and Western civilizations, and their voices resound with us today in the writings of Bernard Lewis, Montgomery Watt, Daniel Pipes and the influential *Clash of Civilisations* by Huntingdon. The idea is not new, and was classically presented by Reuben Levy in 1957.

Islam is at a standstill in the Western world, or is actually retreating. Political considerations apart, it would seem that the creed of Muhammad the Prophet is not suited to peoples reared in the Greek and Roman traditions and codes, which have shown themselves sufficiently elastic to permit of adaptation to varying needs.²²

I am not in dispute with Levy's argument. The research undertaken for this book sheds light on both the early challenges presented by early attempts to transplant Islam in Britain and an important narrative of missiology in a particularly historic context. My interest is in the study of those Muslims, whether contemporary, such as Tariq Ramadan, or from the past, such as Abdullah Quilliam and the founder of the Ahmadiyya and his successors, who were convinced that the new flowering of Islam would occur in the West.

With regard to Muslims attempting to root Islam in the new location of Britain, three terms are of importance: 'Islam in Britain', 'British Islam' and 'Islamic Britain'. The first refers to a contemporary plurality of voices vying to demonstrate that their version of the religion has authenticity. The term 'British Islam' was beginning to gain currency among the generation born and raised in Britain even back in the early 1990s. In this position, Islam is paramount and moderates over and determines the content and shape of ethnic and national identity. Islam is perceived as a universal identity that could be allied with any

national loyalty, and as a primary identity that provides a global ethic and code of behaviour that transcends locality. The third term is far more contentious and refers to the possibility of Britain becoming a Muslim nation sometime in the future. Arguably those who desire 'British Islam' also hold to the dream of Islamic Britain, in whatever way the hope manifests itself. The dream is utopian and the missions in London between the World Wars struggled to achieve an Islamic Britain and provided early debates on the shape of Islam in Britain. As in the present time, there was a plurality of voices that debated how Islam should look in the West. The question raised then, Who speaks for Islam?, resounds with us now and remains unanswered.

The opportunity presented by access to untapped primary and secondary sources written from the 1870s to the early 1940s provided interesting theoretical insights for scholars of religion, in addition to a fuller understanding of the history of Muslims in Britain. I have long taken the view that any attempts to comprehend the formation of religions in new locations requires an analysis of the context in which they arose in their places of origin.²³ This remains the basic structure of this work. Generally, when dealing with the truth claims of the individuals and movements covered in the contents that follow, I draw upon the position that religious phenomena are in the main 'imagined communities'.²⁴ Drawing upon such theories, Talal Asad developed the notion of a 'discursive tradition' to describe Islamic movements, in which knowledge is historically and culturally constituted in the interactive space between people, texts and practice.²⁵ In this way, I have observed a methodological agnosticism with regard to the issue of the Ahmadiyya as an example of Islamic *da'wa*, aware that they have been declared 'non-Muslim' in some Muslim nations, most emphatically Pakistan. However, as a scholar of religion who has long been concerned with questions of liminality and borders, I position myself with those who argue that the term 'border' need not suggest the perimeter of a tradition, but demonstrates the areas where eclecticism, creativity, renewal and syncretism occur.²⁶ The Ahmadiyya can be perceived as a new religious movement within the world of Islam, and the study of new religions within the study of religions has been particularly useful in providing theoretical positions and furthering scholarly knowledge on how established religions formed and reformed to maintain dynamism and authenticity of experience. AlSayyad observes in this respect 'that it is often in the border regions where individuals and ideas osmose across and interact that innovation takes place, and real people live their lives'.²⁷

In claiming that the movement was instrumental in establishing a Muslim community in Britain from 1912, I faced the question, When is Islam not Islam?

And if it is not considered to be Islam, then could the movement be regarded as pioneering Islamic *da'wa* activity in the West? There were also issues of academic neutrality to be faced. In writing the present work, if I positioned the Ahmadiyya as a significant voice preaching Islam in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, I would be drawn into taking sides in an internal religious dispute. I have therefore taken a simple approach to who is inside the fold of Islam, that is, the declaration of the *shahada* 'la illaha il-allah, Muhammad ur rasul Allah' universally recognized as a declaration of faith and witness. I also follow the anthropological convention of acknowledging self-definition. As stated by Jørgens Nielsen, by the very act of defining themselves as Muslims, individuals and movements are 'locating themselves in relation to a tradition'.²⁸

I have drawn upon the method of 'thick description' first used by Ryle (1949) and later by Geertz (1973), who applied it in ethnography.²⁹ Thick description refers to the detailed account of field experiences in which the researcher makes explicit the patterns of cultural and social relationships and puts them in context (Holloway, 1997). Although this book is not ethnography, thick description of the communities concerned permitted me to present their worldview before any engagement in secondary analysis.³⁰

Yet, this is a book that will be read by a far greater audience among the Ahmadiyya, and even their opponents, than academic historians of Islam in Britain. I have argued previously for the position of advocacy among scholars of religion, that 'the Religious Studies scholar should be considering whether the issues that we deal with and study do not allow us to sit on the fence of neutral objectivity, and that we need to squarely address the issue of advocacy'.³¹ Advocacy or collaboration can be achieved in a number of ways. I consider that community confidence-building is one way that advocacy can take place, and a history of significance can develop confidence. In joining with Muslim partners, especially the Ahmadiyya, forming collaborative links, working as equals in a spirit of friendship, I also enter into a partnership where I share their insecurity. Visiting Rabwah in Pakistan, the city built by the Ahmadiyya in 1947, I shared in very real insecurities. The Ahmadiyya, for all their successes, remain a 'community under pressure', and that pressure results from an alternative truth claim to that held by the Sunni and Shi'a narratives concerning prophethood. With regard to that particular truth claim, I have no means at my disposal to determine who is correct, nor do I consider it part of the task of scholars of religion, at least those outside of the domain of Muslim theology. My concern is not truth values but life values, and in this respect I consider that the historical involvement of the Ahmadiyya in preaching Islam from the Edwardian period is not

only an academic exercise highly relevant to the history of Islam and Muslims in Britain, but also a story that has an impact on the life values of a particular community and its members. I am by inclination a pluralist, that is, at least as far I can bring together heart and mind in the name of unity. When this fails, I sometimes side with heart and sometimes with mind. Only I can make that decision. With regard to Ahmadiyya truth claims, I bow to the ultimate phenomenological position that 'the believer is always right'. I also maintain my right to uphold *epoché* and empathy as far as it is possible to do so. Philosophically I acknowledge the position of Vroom, who stated that 'the criteria for the assessment of religious truth claims are not of such a nature that what is true and what is untrue can be established intersubjectively'.³² On my part, I am aware that the Ahmadiyya can celebrate the publication of their prominent role in promoting Islam to Edwardian Britons and I am content to play a part in their affirmation of themselves. On the other hand, I intend no offence to others whose view of the Ahmadiyya is that they are a heretical movement outside the fold of Islam. Even from such a viewpoint, the historical reality is that significant individuals joined the fold of Islam or were inspired to continue on the religious path that they had chosen as a result of missionary endeavour on the part of the two branches of the Ahmadiyya movement, and in the process generated considerable intellectual and creative debate concerning the shape of Islam in Britain. As a scholar of religion by discipline, as opposed to the historian or the social scientist, I hold to the view that religion is a unique set of phenomena that drive human beings to action. This is in itself causal. There may be economic, social or political undercurrents that require examination, but religious belief is a powerful and emotive force that pushes human beings to certain actions. Consequently, quotations from the key players among the Ahmadiyya missionaries are used here to reveal these emotions as much as they are selected for causal analysis of the events. As stated by Nadia Jeldtoft, 'Emotions can be used to transform social realities and they have agential capacity'.³³ Jamie Gilham also acknowledges that studying the religious historically is problematic, as the sources taken from religious movements and the individuals who worked with them are subjective.³⁴ Yet in order to acknowledge the contribution made by the Ahmadiyya, I agree with his observation that what people believe impacts what they do, and therefore the subjectivity of faith contained in the sources needs to be revealed as a religious 'truth' and not necessarily objective.³⁵ My approach to historical writing therefore borrows heavily from ethnography. I wanted my actors to speak with their own voices so that their perceptions would be incorporated into the research. Thus I hoped to move from the historian's 'deductive monological' approach to

the more 'dialogic conversational' tone that has developed from acknowledging the reflexive in modern ethnographical approaches to the study of religion.³⁶

The book will follow a structure based on my theoretical position, whereby the roots of a movement in its place of origin before moving to its new location are explored. Thus, Chapter 2 will provide an overview of Islam in India, with particular reference to the strategies employed to deal with Muslim loss of power. It will engage with the encounter that took place in India in the nineteenth century post-1857 as various Islamic movements and individuals created various responses to the loss of Mughal power and, in particular, the sometimes aggressive stance of Christian missionaries to the other religions of the Indian subcontinent. Chapter 3 will provide a short introduction to the Ahmadiyya movement placed within the context of the loss of Muslim power described in Chapter 2. Chapter 4 will explore the explicit activities of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, with special regard to his encounter with the British Raj and Christian missionaries or Muslim sympathizers in the West, demonstrating how this encounter amounted to an actual realization of the strategy he had developed in response to the new rulers of India. This chapter will engage with the unique aspects of the developing understanding of his prophetic or messianic role only to the degree that understanding his position vis-à-vis his growing belief in a personal divinely appointed mission is necessary to understand his particular view of the significance of the West in his renewal of the prophetic revelation. Chapter 5 will provide an overview of the existing Muslim presence in Britain in the period prior to the advent of the Indian Muslim missionary endeavour led by the Ahmadiyya. Chapter 6 will continue the story, showing the early contacts maintained between prominent Western converts to Islam and the Ahmadiyya founder. Chapter 7 will explore the arrival of the first missionaries and the rediscovery of the Woking mosque as a centre for promoting Islam in London and beyond. Chapter 8 will engage with the division of the Ahmadiyya movement and the new endeavour of the Qadian missionaries to preach a more overt Ahmadiyya version of Islam in London, eventually leading to the founding of the first purpose-built mosque in London in 1926. Chapter 8 will begin with the official opening of the mosque and the transformations that took place in the movement in the years leading up to World War II. The final chapter will conclude with reflections on the significance of the Ahmadiyya in the history of Islam in Britain.

‘Islam in Danger’: Reactions to Mughal Decline and Loss of Power

Any analysis of the origins of the Ahmadiyya in late nineteenth-century Punjab needs to place the movement and its founder in the context of the rallying cry of ‘Islam in danger’ that would arise from time to time in India. This chapter will position the Ahmadiyya within the context of shaping India’s Islam, particularly focusing on a number of strands of Islamic reform that would become increasingly influential as the Mughal Empire declined and was eventually replaced by the British. The Ahmadiyya response will be understood as part of the Islamic reform and revival that accompanied the loss of power to the British.

The fear of Muslim religiosity and culture engulfed or reshaped by an ocean of Hinduism arose periodically and was derived from the unique place of Islam in the subcontinent, in which Muslims ruled, but as a minority. The history of Muslims in India was accompanied by a number of ongoing challenges to shape Islam. Arguably the foremost was the problem of the majority Hindu population and how to engage with its stubborn loyalty to age-old worldviews, on the surface so at odds with the Abrahamic faiths.¹ Inextricably linked to this challenge were the issues of governance of the Mughal Empire and implementation of Shari'a law, with both emperors and clerics often taking different positions influencing the political and religious shaping of so-called orthodoxy, primarily fought out between various shades of Sufism and arguably more textual-based reform movements, indigenous Indian sources of authenticity and authority derived from Muslim majority nations, such as Persia, Central Asia or Arab centres of power. All of this was to take place within the wider forming of a unique Indian Muslim civilization – which Francis Robinson labels Perso-Islamic – formed out of creative tensions and blending the various constituents of culture over the centuries.² I will argue that part of this civilizational shaping in a sub-continent renowned for its religiosity would be the pursuit of an Indian Islam,

distinct in appearance but able to claim superiority over all other cultural forms of the religion.

The first uttering of 'Islam in danger' was to arise in the reign of Akbar (1556–1605) and was not connected to the decline of the Mughals, for arguably the empire was at its peak, or at least in ascendancy.³ In this case, the crisis was caused by the syncretistic tendency that was to reach its zenith during this period. Akbar made the *ulama* sign a decree of infallibility, which in effect placed the decisions of the monarch over and above the Shari'a. Orthodox individuals and groups were appalled by his abandoning Shari'a law and establishing a new religion, *Din al-Ilahi*.⁴ Akbar came to be viewed as an apostate by these orthodox *ulama* and a symbol of the corruption and decline of a 'pure' prophetic Islam resulting from syncretistic contact with Hinduism. This situation brought to a head the idea that Islam was in danger of being engulfed in an all-embracing sea of Hinduism.

The rallying cry for Sunni reform was made by Shaykh Ahmad al-Faruqi al-Sirhindi (1564–1624), a Naqshbandi Sufi and a Hanafi jurist who feared the encouragement of heterodoxy in the reign of the emperor.⁵ The significance of Sirhindi in Indian Islam, once the hagiography and political productions of him as the arch-enemy of Mughal liberality and compromises with an orthodox Islam are sifted out,⁶ lie in his assertion that true Islam must rest upon the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet, and that strict adherence to the Shari'a needed to be maintained. Sirhindi also resisted Ibn al-Arabi's (d. 1240) doctrine of unity of being (*wahdat al-wujud*) that held sway over India's Sufis, and proposed a modified unity of experience (*wahdat al-shuhud*), which emphasized the total transcendence of God. Others, for example Abd al-Haqq (1551–1642), resisted the dominance of the rationalist sciences (*maqulat*) in Akbar's court after studying Hadith in Arabia.⁷

Sirhindi's solution to challenges facing Indian Muslims sees him reconstructed as the protector of orthodoxy among later-generation reformers, who had far more to fear from the 'ocean of Hinduism' once Muslims had lost power to the British. Whether one interprets Sirhindi as the originator of an increasingly orthodox reaction to India's unique cultural synthesis or Sirhindi as appropriated by later reformers of India's Islam, the reality remains that one conservative reaction was the reform of Islam based on the detailed application of Shari'a, the revival of revealed sciences (*manqalat*), especially Hadith studies, and the removal of cultural accretions and innovations arising out of heterodox and antinomian interpretations of Sufism, Shi'a Islam and, in particular, Hinduism.⁸ In this view, true Islam must rest on the Qur'an and the Sunna of the

Prophet. The correct Sunna was established in approved Hadith. Sirhindi's deep awareness of the need for reform, combined with his suspicion of innovation and apparent distrust of any contact with the non-Muslim world, made him the ideal pioneer of Muslim isolationism as a response to 'Islam in danger'.

Shah Wali-Allah (1703–1762), often described as the greatest Islamic scholar India ever produced,⁹ picked up the major strands of Sirhindi's ideas, or, alternatively, he and his successors reinterpreted them in the light of their own thinking, developing them into a coherent ideology that was to form the basis of most Islamic revival in the subcontinent right through to the present day. These eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century reformers would first concentrate their influence in Delhi, where they hoped to impact the Mughal rulers. They were linked to Sirhindi and the earlier reformers, such as Abd al-Haqq, through their allegiance to the Indian branch of the Naqshbandiya, and Shah Wali-Allah's father, Abd al-Rahim (d. 1718), who had picked up the mantle of Hadith study in Hijaz and continued the challenge to the rational sciences.¹⁰

The decay of the Mughal Empire, however, had begun to set in long before the East India Company established its dominion over Bengal. Since the demise of Aurangzeb in 1707, there had been a decline of central power, which fed the disintegration of Muslim political power and culture.¹¹ Feudal lords were no longer prepared to act as vassals and now established their own kingdoms.¹² There were rebellions by Marathas, Sikhs and Rajputs, and in 1739, Nadir Shah of Persia sacked Delhi. The decline of Mughal authority during Shah Wali-Allah's lifetime can be observed by the awareness that in his relatively short life, there were five Mughal rulers: Muhammad Shah (1719–1748), Ahmad Shah Bahadur (1748–1754), Alamgir II (1754–1759), Shah Jahan III (1759) and Shah Alam II (1759–1806).

During the era of Muslim domination, the unity of the faithful was expected to be maintained by the ruler, who was seen as the defender of the faith and the custodian of the law. However, Ala'ud-din Khalji (1290–1320) declared that polity and government were one entity and the rules and decrees of Islamic law another. The early *ulama*, realizing the complexity of the Indian situation, accepted this.¹³ Alternatively, a truly Islamic temporal order was that in which the Shari'a as understood by the consensus of scholars was enforced by a righteous Muslim ruler. The anarchy and degeneration of the eighteenth century, and the loss of large tracts of Mughal territory to the Hindu Marathas and the Sikhs, helped to create a desire for the renewal or purification of Islam based on the latter alternative. At that period, Aurangzeb did introduce reforms intended to make the empire an Islamic state. He opposed all taxes not authorized by

Islamic law and appointed censors of public morals to ensure that the Shari'a was implemented.¹⁴ The Qur'an states that God had confided the world to His righteous servants¹⁵; for some Muslim thinkers, the decline in temporal power was an indication that they were no longer to be counted among the righteous. As so often in Muslim history, the pattern of decline in temporal power was accompanied by a religious revival.

That 'the political disintegration of the eighteenth century in the subcontinent was not partnered by religious collapse is largely due to the work and inspiration of Shah Wali-allah', Ikram claims.¹⁶ He argues that through his inspiration, the religious leadership came to believe that political leaders could no longer hold onto the empire without the motivating force of religion. In fact, Shah Wali-Allah, throughout his life, never ceased turning to various Muslim potentates in an attempt to restore the glory of the Muslim way of life, especially when he perceived the weakness of the Mughal ruler in India. None of these rulers, however, responded to his call. It was difficult for him to conceive of any solution other than the discovery of an enlightened but firm Islamic-orientated ruler who was strong enough to re-establish the rule of the Shari'a. Thus he invited the Nizam of Hyderabad (1724–1748) to come and save the empire. The Nizam was disinterested, so Shah Wali-Allah turned to Najib-ud-Daula (d. 1790) of Rohilkhand, and even Shah Abdali of Afghanistan. All of these overtures were without success. Abdali did respond and, assisted by Najib-ud Daula, defeated the Marathas at the Panipat in 1761, but looted and left.¹⁷

Shah Wali-Allah reiterated that the lack of moral standards which led to the decline of Muslim fortunes was due to contact with Hindus and badly converted Muslims.¹⁸ He accused the Muslims of India of becoming Indians rather than identifying with the larger worldwide *umma*.¹⁹ He was especially afraid that Islam, the only religion that had not been corrupted by innovation, was itself in danger of losing its pristine and final revelation.²⁰ He insisted that Indian Muslims should see themselves as an integral part of the larger Muslim world rather than uniquely Indian.²¹ He saw the intolerable political situation as proof that Indian Muslims had failed to fulfil the requirements of the Shari'a. Recommitment to Islam was required, and no true Muslim should accept the contemporary decline. He was convinced that a regenerated Islam could again be strong enough to counteract the effects of internal decay and external domination. An essential Islam was contained in the revelation to the Prophet, and the exemplary inspiration was the life of Muhammad himself. Shah Wali-Allah's emphasis on the role of the Prophet led him to stress the importance of a renewed study of Hadith.²² He urged Muslim scholars to study the Qur'an and

the Hadith directly. However, not all of those inspired by his approach to solving the crises of Indian Islam were so emboldened to engage in *ijtihad* of this nature.

Yet many would be drawn to his conviction that if Muslims could not be united by being citizens in *Dar al-Islam*, then there must be an integrated Muslim brotherhood that could reach out to bring everyone into a united religious social grouping: a kind of righteous *umma* within the *umma*. The idea of a righteous group (*jamaat*) within the wider Muslim community that would reinspire or invoke a 'pure' Islam became prevalent in the Indian subcontinent as the decline accelerated.

Very few Muslim thinkers from the region have not been influenced by Shah Wali-Allah, even those who are in opposition to each other. He lived in an age that saw the rapid decline of Mughal power, but the Battle of Plassey, which placed the East India Company in effective control of Bengal, occurred four years after his death. It was left to his sons and successors to develop his ideas into a coherent movement dealing with the transfer of power of Islamic rule to the British. They went on to create strategies of isolation based on communicating the minutiae of strict adherence to the Shari'a through education and the issuing of *fatwas* (opinion concerning Islamic law issued by a jurisprudent).²³ As with Sirhindi, they resisted Sufi reliance on the teachings of Ibn Arabi.

In addition to Shah Wali-Allah, Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan (d. 1781), another spiritual descendent of Sirhindi, established his madrasa in Delhi, maintaining isolation from the growing British presence and arguing that only Shari'a compliance could rescue Muslims from the insidious doctrines of God's immanence.²⁴ Such strategies were created to maintain the borders of Muslim group identity. They also ensured some control over keeping Muslim life within the bounds of the Shari'a when later there would be no Muslim state to enforce the law. The detailed restrictions on daily activity also functioned as a boundary that protected those Muslims who observed such practices from both Hindu and British India. Furthermore, the issuing of *fatwas* confirmed that India was no longer *dar al-Islam*; it was now *dar al-Harb*. When the British entered Delhi, Shah Abdul Aziz (d. 1824), the eldest son of Shah Wali-Allah, issued his famous *fatwa* to this effect.²⁵ The *fatwas* functioned as recognition that organization of the state was no longer in Muslim hands. The loss of power would bring several Muslim responses, some of them from the religious and family descendants of Shah Wali-Allah. Robinson argues that this group of Naqshbandis inspired by Sirhindi and other reformers of Akbar's time were also in opposition to the dominant Perso-Islamic culture.

Bahadur Shah Zafar became emperor in 1837, and although technically the Mughal Empire retained nominal authority, the authority of the ruler was limited only to Delhi, or Shahjahanabad, now known as Old Delhi. In 1857, he issued a *firman* (a mandate or decree issued by a Muslim ruler) supporting the rebellion of 1857, and on the defeat of the insurrection, he was tried for treason and exiled to Rangoon.²⁶ The Indian rebellion also ended the rule of the British East India Company when Queen Victoria formally took the title of empress of India and commenced the era of the British Raj under the authority of the viceroy.

The decline and eventual loss of the Mughal Empire would lead to the cry of 'Islam in danger' re-emerging from those who perceived themselves as the guardians of the religion. Many were drawn from the descendants of those who had opposed the dominant Perso-Islamic culture, and to those reformers, the blame for the loss of the empire lay in allegiance to a culture, including religious forms that were not based on the original texts of Islam (Hadith and Qur'an). However, the solution to the threat to the religion was diverse, and in some ways determined the various factions that arose in subcontinent Islam during the nineteenth century, including the Ahmadiyya. From 1803, Muslims would have to come to terms not only with being a minority in Hindu India but also with being relatively powerless under British rule. As they were no longer able to control a whole range of issues relating to the organization of the law, there was a proliferation of direct issuing of *fatwas* from the *ulama* to believers.²⁷ Common penal laws for India and separate judicial courts established by the British meant that Muslims were mainly concerned with the small details of everyday life, and although they had no coercive power, they were essential to Muslims searching for a way to preserve a true expression of their faith under foreign domination.²⁸ The issuing of *fatwas* indicated a move towards creating self-contained communities in matters of religion and everyday behaviour.²⁹ The thousands of *fatwas* issued by various *ulama* would help maintain the boundaries of the various movements that appeared throughout the nineteenth century. *Fatwas* were issued to condemn the beliefs and practices of other groups and to give authority to one's own as each movement determined to prove that it was the authentic voice of Islamic orthodoxy.

Many of the *fatwas* were issued by the descendants of Shah Wali-Allah. The nineteenth century saw his ideas organized into energetic sociopolitical religious movements. Mujeeb states that Shah Wali-Allah's sons, Shah Abdul Aziz (1746–1824), Shah Rafi'uddin (1748–1817) and Shah Abdul Qadir (1753–1827), 'turned to the study of the Qur'an, the popularization of religious knowledge,

and the creation of a new aspiration to study, to understand and live by the Shari'a.³⁰ As part of their aim of popularizing the correct interpretation and practice of Islam, two of the brothers made translations of the Qur'an into Urdu, which was rapidly taking over from Persian as the language of educated Indian Muslims.³¹ The reformers influenced by Shah Wali-Allah were to encourage the use of Urdu as the basis for communication among the religious elite. In time, Urdu was to become one of the most important symbols of Muslim identity in India. Shah Abdul Aziz took over from his father as spiritual leader in Delhi and became the central figure in an important circle of reformist teaching.³² He was a prolific issuer of *fatwas* in an attempt to ensure that instruction in Shari'a should spread beyond his circle of followers and students.³³ In continuation of his father's message, many of his *fatwas* were explicit commands to follow the Sunna of the Prophet by continuous reference to Hadith.³⁴ His declaration that India was *Dar al-Harb* opened up the possibility of *jihad* as an activist alternative to the more scholarly issuing of *fatwas*.³⁵

There were those who chose to take a more aggressive approach to overthrowing the British, or at least creating an Islamic environment in which the rule of Shari'a would be the priority in governance and law. The foremost proponent of violent jihad was Sayyid Ahmad of Rae Bareilly (1782–1831) of the family of Shah Wali-Allah. As a young man, from 1806 to 1811, he studied with Abdul Qadir in Delhi. Abdul Aziz's son-in-law Abdul Hayy (d. 1828) and Shah Wali-Allah's grandson Muhammad Ishmail (1781–1831) were to become his followers after his return to Delhi in 1818. Both took an oath of allegiance to him as their shaikh. They assisted him in writing his two influential works, the *Siratu'l - Mustaqim* (*The Straight Path*) and the *Taqwiyyatu'l - Iman* (*The Strengthening of the Faith*), in which he stressed the centrality of *tawhid* and condemned all practices and beliefs that in any way compromised the essential teachings of Islam, especially those pertaining to Sufism.³⁶ Metcalf suggests that his commitment to the reform of custom and practice was even stronger than that of his teachers from the family of Shah Wali-Allah.³⁷

Rather than confront the powerful British, Sayyid Ahmad established a small kingdom in the north-west frontier region, from which he waged *jihad* against the Sikhs of the Punjab. According to Metcalf, Sayyid Ahmad chose to fight the Sikhs, as *jihad* had to be fought in accordance with the Sunna. It was not simply rebellion. In order to do this, Sayyid Ahmad had to carry out his campaign from a Muslim area. He chose the Sikhs of the Punjab as his opponents, blaming them for interfering in Muslim religious life. In 1826 he had set out on a journey of 3,000 miles through Rajasthan, Sind, Baluchistan and Afghanistan to

the tribal territory he was determined to fight from.³⁸ He defeated the Sikhs at Akora Khattak in November 1826 and began to establish the rule of Shari'a in the area he had carved out for himself and his followers. In 1831 he was trapped at Balakot by the Sikhs, and he and 600 of his *mujahiddin* were killed.³⁹

In the years prior to his *jihad*, Sayyid Ahmad established a method of spreading the revival message that was to last throughout the nineteenth century, long after his military operations had failed. Particularly in the period after returning from his Hajj, he began to orchestrate his followers into the type of organization that was to become the model for the future *jamaats* in the subcontinent. He established a network of centres through preaching in villages and distributing tracts. Leaders of prayer were appointed to mosques to teach the basic beliefs of reform Islam as understood by Shah Wali-Allah and his successors, subscriptions were collected and Islamic courts were set up to administer the Shari'a among Muslims. The followers of Sayyid Ahmad, like those of the later nineteenth-century reform movements, felt themselves to be a part of a special community with access to the true teachings of the faith.⁴⁰ They had a sense of being unique, of exclusivity. Metcalf suggests that this gave meaning to people whose lives appeared to be beyond their own control.⁴¹

Sayyid Ahmad used the Delhi nucleus of reformers centred on the descendants of Shah Wali-Allah to give him contacts with a network of *ulama* and students from the most important religious families of the Doab,⁴² and Robinson cites him as saying that he was opposed to 'Indian, Persian, and Roman customs which were contrary to the Prophet's teachings'.⁴³ In these words we hear the Delhi reformers' opposition to Perso-Islamic culture and its syncretistic tendencies.

Sayyid Ahmad's death ended the possibility of re-establishing Islam through the means of *jihad*, even though Muslim resistance at the time of the 1857 uprising was sometimes perceived in such terms in order to provide legitimacy to the rebellion against the British rulers. The British backlash to the 1857 uprising finally destroyed their hopes, and very few Muslims believed that violence could remove the British after 1857.⁴⁴ Muhammad Muzhar Nanautawi and Rashid Gangohi, the founders of Deoband, had fought against the British in 1857, inspired by the activities of Sayyid Ahmad, but after the failure of the last military uprising against the British, these prominent young *ulama* gave up any thought of further direct confrontation.⁴⁵ But Sayyid Ahmad had left behind two important ideals to inspire them: the possibility of an Islamic society based on reform and revival, and a means of revitalizing Islam through reform-movement *jamaats*. After his death, the remaining reformers focused their attention on the latter, with an emphasis on education.

In 1824, Shah Abdul Aziz died and was succeeded by his grandsons Muhammad Ishaq (1778–1846) and Yaqub, who continued his approach of maintaining distance from the new power in India. These *ulama* hated not only the British, but everything to do with British culture – the British way of life, British dress and British-style education. In all these areas, the Islamic reformers saw the opportunity to encourage Muslims to assert their own unique identity; the religious identity proposed was not that of the old Perso-Islamic culture, but an imagined community based on early Arabian Islam. Shah Wali-Allah had declared, 'we are an Arab people, whose fathers have fallen into exile in Hindustan, and Arabic genealogy and Arabic language are our pride'.⁴⁶ The reality was development of the indigenous Urdu as the language to convey the primary religious sources of Islam, even the medium through which to study Arabic, and a burgeoning religious literature that in India would come to rival the Arabic sources.⁴⁷ Shah Abdul Aziz had insisted that it was improper for Muslims to learn English in order to secure jobs in the administration or to promote better relations with the British.⁴⁸ Thus, before 1857, many Indian Muslims were far more concerned with purifying their own religion than imitating a culture which in their eyes was barely worth the name. After 1857, that culture would have to be taken seriously, not for its own worth but in view of its material success. In their efforts to keep Muslim society distinct from the British invaders and the taint of Christianity, the reformers began to construct a wall of isolation that was cemented together by religion.⁴⁹

Although both of Abdul Aziz's grandsons migrated to Mecca in 1841, they continued the work of spreading Shah Wali-Allah's vision of reform. They left behind a committed nucleus of students: for example, Abdul Ghani Naqshbandi (1819–1878), who succeeded Muhammad Ishaq; Fazlur Rahman Ganjmuradabadi (1793–1895), a famous *pir* of post-1857 India; Sayyid Nazir Husain Muhaddis Dihlawi (d. 1902), the founder of *Ahl-i Hadith*; Imadadullah (1817–1899), who was shaikh to many nineteenth-century reform *ulama*; Ahmad Ali Saharanpur; and Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–1898), political and educational leader of the post-1857 modernists,⁵⁰ who in turn were to dramatically influence the direction of Islam in the subcontinent. The call to reform, rejecting Perso-Islamic culture in favour of an Islam based on primary sources and calling Muslims back to Qur'an and Sunna, was an attempt to demonstrate that such a message had the possibility of uniting Indian Muslims who were otherwise divided by class, education, language and regional culture. However, the message was not endorsed by all, and there were key differences even among the students mentioned above.

Others, such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan, came to accept that as the British did not interfere with the practice of Islam, it followed that India was still *Dar*

al-Islam. The British government was, after all, an established, legitimate regime, and therefore one would be breaking the law to rebel or create disaffection against it. Muhammad Ishmail declared that Muslims under British rule were not being persecuted and were also subjects of the British government, thus 'they were bound by their religion not to join a jihad against it'.⁵¹ The founder of the Ahmadiyya, Mirza Ghulab Khan, went even further and argued that Islam would only flourish under British rule.

In contrast, the Shah Wali-Allah-inspired reformers understood the necessity of using their zeal and enthusiasm to establish their vision of an Islam capable of existing in the absence of a Muslim state. There is no doubt that they succeeded in this, but the price paid was isolationism, which they justified by perceiving the culture of the British as *jahiliyya* (place of ignorance comparable with pre-Islamic Arabia), and thus to be avoided. The *jamaats* that had been established by these various reformers also led to a sense of exclusivity. Islam was rescued in a time of extreme crisis and then renewed, but the reformers failed in uniting Indian Muslims.

All the nineteenth-century reformers and their predecessors helped to create a unique national identity for Indian Muslims based on faith. As noted by Lord Dufferin, the viceroy of India (1826–1902), they came to hold a special position defined by monotheism, a unique revelation and a remembrance of the days when they had reigned supreme in India. Consequently, a very large number of Muslims in British India felt themselves to be part of a special community.⁵²

One of the major issues confronting Indian Muslims during this period was education. Robinson has explored in detail the syllabus known as *Dars-i Nizami*, showing how it was transformed from the Mughal requirements for administrators, with its emphasis on rational sciences centred in Lucknow, and particularly the institution of Farangi Mahall. The syllabus was picked up by the East India Company, which reinforced the rational science bias.⁵³ The Islamic revivalists were not happy with the rationalist sciences and created their own institutions, which focused almost exclusively on the religious sciences, especially the application of Hadith to *fiqh* (jurisprudence). Robinson explains that these Islamic madrasas were primarily centred in Delhi initially so that the rulers could be influenced. Foremost among them was Madrasa-yi Rahimiyya, where all of Abd al-Aziz's sons taught.⁵⁴ During this period, arguably the most important alternative Muslim educational institution was Delhi College, founded in 1825 and closed down after the 1857 uprising. The college had been established by the government to educate middle-class Indian youths to occupy positions in the administration. Taking over the buildings of the Madrasa-e Ghazi al-Din,

the college had a British principal and was expanded by endowments from the Nawab of Oudh in 1828.⁵⁵ The curriculum combined Western and Oriental subjects, including English language and literature, sciences, Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, geography, history and mathematics. Barbara Metcalf argues that the success of the school among Muslims was due to the use of Urdu as the primary means of instruction.⁵⁶ Many of these Muslim pupils were attracted by the presence of Mamluk Ali, the school's head of Arabic. Mamluk Ali had close connections with the family of Shah Wali-Allah. He had gone to Delhi in 1842 with the express purpose of studying under the descendants of Wali-Allah. The first head of Arabic at Delhi College had been Maulana Rashiduddin Khan.⁵⁷ Mamluk Ali studied under him and later succeeded him. Rashiduddin Khan had been a disciple of Shah Rafiuddin, the youngest son of Shah Wali-Allah. He had also studied under Shah Wali-Allah's other two sons, Shah Abd al-Aziz and Abdul al-Qadir.⁵⁸

Among the members of the reform movement associated with Delhi College, there were mixed feelings concerning contact with the British administration. Metcalf suggests that the students of Muhammad Ishaq and Yaqub shared a common experience created by their commitment to Islamic reform and their exposure to Western institutions. The latter influence was created by the missionary societies and the educational institutions of the British.⁵⁹ She argues that it was the varying balance between their two formative influences that determined the different directions in which their followers were to develop their ideology throughout the remainder of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century.⁶⁰ Some, despite their fears of contact with the missionaries and the government, went on to prestigious positions either in government schools or in the administration. Through Mamluk Ali, they achieved not only a firm commitment to Islam but also access to government service, so it is not surprising that among his pupils were the founders of the Aligarh movement, including Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–1898). Robinson places more emphasis on the internal struggle between the Perso-Islamic culture that had dominated the higher classes of the Mughal Empire and the revivalists who sought their inspiration in the Hijaz.⁶¹ I would suggest that the two are not disconnected.

The heirs to the early nineteenth-century programme of reform and revival turned their attention to establishing educational institutions that could train men to give religious guidance to Muslims of all backgrounds. Suspicious of Western education, they revived religious education along the lines of the traditional Arabic madrasas found in the Hijaz. The college at Deoband, founded in 1867 by the descendants of Shah Wali-Allah, for example, taught *Tafsir, Hadith*,

Islamic law, philosophy of law, astronomy, *Unani* medicine and mathematics, with the greatest emphasis being on *Tafsir* and *Hadith*.⁶² The original curriculum was basically that devised by Farangi Mahall in the eighteenth century but, as stated, with a renewed emphasis on the religious sciences.

The founders of such institutions were primarily concerned with the Islamic quality of individual lives, and they were sceptical of the *ulama* who served the British. Wanting to avoid more direct confrontation with the British or come under their influence, they chose to protect Islam from both the British conquerors and the Hindu majority by eliminating all apparent cultural accretions from the faith.⁶³ In order to achieve this, they focused their attention on the Muslim community. They left Delhi and established themselves in Deoband, Saharanpur, Khowlah, Gangohi and Bareilly, all in the north-east corner of Uttar Pradesh. These were places with large established Muslim communities, and the British presence was less noticeable than in Delhi and the cities of North India. It was here that they established their centres for preserving Muslim culture and religious life along the lines taught by Shah Wali-Allah. They made the madrasa the institutional centre of their activity. It was felt that establishing a religious academic institution was necessary in order to keep the Muslim religious consciousness awake and to re-organize on a national scale.⁶⁴ Deoband would become the pattern for all the other madrasas throughout the subcontinent established by so many of their graduates. The aim of the school was to train well-educated *ulama* who would be committed to the cause of reform Islam as taught by Shah Wali-Allah and his successors. However, not all the graduates of Delhi College would agree with the strategy employed by his descendants.

Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–1898) had been educated at Delhi College under the tutelage of Mamluk Ali, but he chose a very different path to the reformers of Deoband. Arguably he can be described as the father of Indian Islamic modernism, a path he carved out of his deep concern with the state of Muslims in a world dominated by European colonizing powers. Sayyid Ahmad Khan came to the opinion that the success of the British could be an inspiration to the declining Muslim civilization in India, and that Muslims could benefit from learning the contemporary sciences of the British and modelling their own reformed education system on British secular institutions. He perceived his fellow Muslims as backward and in need of modern education.⁶⁵ He made it his primary aim to convince the British that the Muslims were their natural allies in India, despite the antagonism of the reform *ulama* and the Muslim involvement in 1857. It was during the decade of 1860s that Sayyid Ahmad Khan formed his ideas of a 'modern Islam' and a Muslim polity living under British rule. During this period, he

wrote *Târikh Sarkashî-e Dilca Bijnore* (A History of Insurrection in Bijnor District) and *Asbâb-e Baghawat-e Hind* (The Causes of Indian Mutiny). In 1860–1861, he published another tract, *Risâlah Khair Khawahân Musalmanân: An Account of the Loyal Mohammedans of India*, in which he claimed that the Indian Muslims were the most loyal subjects of the British Raj because of their similar disposition and the monotheistic principles of their religion, founded from the same roots as Christianity. He wrote a commentary on the Old and the New Testaments,⁶⁶ and argued that the Qur'an should be accessible to hermeneutics as well as traditional Islamic sciences for its interpretation. Khan's main approach to the Qur'an was to suggest that revelation and science should be in harmony, as both illuminate the truths concerning creation.⁶⁷ Sayyid Ahmad Khan remained convinced that Muslims needed to study Western science, and his exegesis of the Qur'an attempted to show that modern science was in agreement with Islam. Consequently he tried to demythologize the Qur'an and its teachings, dealing with the more imaginative passages as metaphorical rather than literal. He went as far as to proclaim that the Qur'an's invitation to reflect on creation could be interpreted as a call to Muslims to excel in science.

On April 1, 1869, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, accompanied by his two sons, left India and arrived in London on May 4th.⁶⁸ Significantly, he visited Oxford and Cambridge and a number of schools, including Eton and Harrow, which would provide the inspiration for the founding of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh in 1877. In 1920, the college would become Aligarh Muslim University. In his modernist approach he found a way to integrate Western-style education and methodology of study with the principles of Islam, albeit with a radically different model for reform than what was desired by those inspired by Shah Wali-Allah. Both protagonists agreed that Islam was in danger, but their attitudes towards the British in India were diametrically opposed. Yet all were in their own way responding to the collapse of the Mughal Empire, the invasion of the British, the reversion of Muslim power and influence in India and the age-old issue of defining Islam in the Indian context.

Robinson argues that Perso-Islamic culture rested upon the pillars of first, Persian language and literature, and second, Islamic knowledge, both formal and mystical, and both of these were integrated fully into the imperial court.⁶⁹ They found their expression in *ashraf* culture, which he defines as 'those whose ancestors came, or those who were in a position to claim that their ancestors had come from outside the subcontinent: men of Arab, Iranian, Turkish, or Afghan descent'.⁷⁰ But it was more than ancestral descent; the *ashraf* considered that power was their birthright and, in Robinson's words, 'they cherished what they felt were

the international Perso-Islamic standards of cultivation and behaviour'.⁷¹ It is clear that this long-standing Indian cultural manifestation was in crisis throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from both the descendants of Shah Wali-Allah and the new British rulers of India, who imposed their versions of dress, manners, architecture, literature and education. Along with them came the Christian missionaries, challenging the truths of Islam and critiquing much that belonged to the old Sufi traditions as superstition. Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the family of Shah Wali-Allah may have been diametrically opposed, but they both offered a defence against the apparent collapse of an age-old Muslim supremacy of Indian cultural life.

In the Punjab, the birthplace of Mirza Ghulam Ahmed, the crisis for Muslims had begun long before the British invasion. The province was one of the earliest territories in India to come under Muslim rule. In the first half of the tenth century, Mahmud of Ghazni (971–1030) added the Punjab to the Ghaznavid Empire, followed by a more successful invasion at the end of the twelfth century by Muhammad of Ghor. The symbolic importance of the Punjab developed under Mahmood, when the city of Lahore developed into a second capital of the Turkic-dominated Ghaznavid Empire. Sultan Mahmud's incursions into northern India established high Persian culture in Lahore, attracting scholars and poets from Khorasan, India and Central Asia to the city.⁷² The Punjab grew to be the epitome of Perso-Islamic culture, with Lahore rivalling Delhi as a centre.

During the powerful reign of Aurangzeb (1618–1707), the Sikhs were marshalling resistance to Mughal rule in the Punjab. Founded in the fifteenth century by Guru Nanak (1469–1539), a peaceful preacher of universal Oneness uniting all humanity, Sikhism had flourished in the Punjab under a succession of teachers, gaining territory and fighting local Hindu hill chiefs and Muslim regional powers even as early as the rule of Shah Jehan (1592–1666).⁷³ Gobind Singh (1666–1708), the last guru of the Sikhs, formed his followers into a powerful Jat caste fighting force under the religious brotherhood of the Khalsa, and after his death, the Sikhs continued to gain territory in the Punjab, organizing themselves throughout the eighteenth century into twelve small but powerful kingdoms, until their consolidation and the founding of the Sikh kingdom of Ranjit Singh.⁷⁴ On 7 July 1799, Ranjit Singh took control of the city of Lahore and from there went on to annex the remainder of the Punjab. In April 1801, he was invested as the maharaja of Punjab. In 1802, Ranjit Singh captured Amritsar, and followed this in 1807 with the conquest of Kasur from the Afghan chief Qutb ud-Din.⁷⁵ The crowning of a Sikh ruler over the Punjab was the culmination of Sikh struggles with Muslim rulers in the region that had lasted

throughout the preceding century. The loss of the Punjab to the Sikhs in the early eighteenth century and the establishment of a Sikh kingdom under Ranjit Singh in the early nineteenth century were major blows and early signs of the decline of Mughal power.⁷⁶

Muslims in the Punjab, in spite of the contemporary Sikh rhetoric of the multicultural tolerance of their kingdom, would certainly have felt the impact of this loss nearly a century before the empire finally relinquished any semblance of power to the British. Whereas many of the Islamic movements of the period saw the British as a problem to be resolved, it is not surprising that some Muslims in the Punjab regarded the Christian British, with their Abrahamic origins, as preferable occupants in power to the Sikhs, with their Indic monotheism, who were perceived as much more closely allied to the Hindus. Some might have hoped that the status, economic power and political position of the Punjab's Muslims would improve under the British when they annexed the region in 1849, and the perceived injustices of Sikh rule would be righted. Certainly Mirza Ghulam Ahmed had his own reasons to be unhappy with Sikh governance of the Punjab and to consider the British as more likely to administer justice to Muslims based on a foundation in ethics and law laid down by Christian and Jewish roots.

This chapter has explored various responses to the crises of Islam that rose to a peak in the nineteenth century with the complete loss of Muslim power. The chapter does not intend to be definitive, or even a new understanding of Indian history in the period. Its only intention is to highlight the issues and examine some of the responses to the collapse of Muslim power as a context or framework in which to place the Ahmadiyya.⁷⁷ I have drawn upon my own work in the area⁷⁸ and that of a number of Muslim historians, who have the benefit for my purposes of writing Muslim histories of India in a contested arena where such things are usually written in a partisan manner. To add weight to their testimonies, I have used primarily the work of Barbara Metcalf and Francis Robinson. The former is acknowledged for her work on the Shah Wali-Allah-inspired reform movements and the Islamic reaction to the British Empire, the latter for his work on the clash between Perso-Islamic culture and the Arabian peninsula where inspired voices were calling for a return to Qur'an and Sunna.

My main point was to highlight the diverse voices struggling to create narratives of dissent, and to recreate Islam as the means to restore Muslim fortunes in India. I have argued that central to these concerns is a far older dilemma concerning the form that Islam should take in India. Into this creative mix arising out of turmoil and loss of power there would enter a radical new voice demanding a revolutionary response, not only in the form of

human endeavour to reform Islam but with the direct intervention of Allah. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908), born in a small backwater of the empire, would reject the isolationism of Deoband, the modernism of Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the jihadism of Sayyid Ahmad. He would agree that the Sirhindi vision of an Islam that returned to the purity of the Prophetic period was paramount, but would reject the *fiqh*-based reforms of the Deobandi educators. His relationship with the British rulers of India not only was opposed to those who would declare India as *dar-al Harb*, but went as far as recommending loyalty from the Muslims of India to the British Raj. However, this would be accompanied by an attack on Christianity, a ‘destruction of the Cross’ that could only succeed with Muslims understanding and living by the tenets of the final revelation given to Muhammad.

This latter voice would declare a new prophetic impulse, one that would not only restore the final revelation to the Muslims of the world, but establish Islam in the capital city of the British and, from there, to the world. This unlikely intervention would have repercussions for the religious life of Britain itself. The reform movements inspired by the descendants of Shah Wali-Allah would have no major impact on Islam in Britain until the arrival of South Asian migrants from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh in the second half of the twentieth century, but in the following chapters we will see how this one Islamic movement that arose in the Punjab was to have a profound impact in late-Edwardian Britain and into the interwar years. The next chapter will provide a brief introduction to the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement and its subsequent growth in Northern India and beyond.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and the Ahmadiyya Movement

In the last chapter it was shown that not all of India's *ulama* were happy with the perceived departure from Islamic norms displayed in Perso-Islamic culture. Some of India's Islamic scholars would distance themselves from the Arabs while simultaneously promoting themselves as heirs to the Arab revelation, and produce their own corpus of sacred interpretive texts in their own sacred language (Urdu), while others would try to connect to the wider world of Islamic scholarship. As the decline of the Mughal Empire heralded its era of doubt and inward reflection on the relationship between the loss of power and the state of Islam in the Indian subcontinent, we have seen that reform movements with all possible solutions to the crisis would emerge. The conquest of India by the British accelerated this process, and Indian Muslims of the second half of the nineteenth century laboured with the additional religious, political, educational and social options available to them to resolve the pragmatic issue of loss of power and a subsequent crisis of faith. The most liminal, and certainly divisive, was arguably the Ahmadiyya response. This chapter will provide a biography of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and the subsequent movement that he founded.

The Ahmadiyya Mission and its founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, are consequences of Indian Muslims attempting to define themselves as a distinct civilization but maintaining Islam in India as an authentic branch of the final monotheistic Abrahamic revelation to the Arabs. The issue for Indian Muslims had always been the ancient heritage of Indian spirituality, its place in the history of religions, its multitude of sacred texts and saintly men and women, the piety of its multitudes and the depth of its wisdom corpus, alongside the relative insignificance of Abraham and his descendants in the Indian religious psyche. In Perso-Islamic culture, the upper classes of India had successfully formed a civilization that brought together many of these elements and, through the Ibn Arabi doctrine of unity of being (*wahdat al-wujud*) prevalent among Indian

Sufis, created links to India's indigenous devotional and mystical traditions.¹ The resulting blend of religious and cultural elements brought about a distinct Mughal civilization that was uniquely Indian and was echoed by degrees of syncreticity among the rural masses.

One of the first commentators on the Ahmadiyya was H. A. Walter, who wrote on the movement in 1918.² The account of the movement was published in J. N. Farquhar's *The Religious Life of India Series*. Both Walter and Farquhar were Christians, each at one point literary secretary for the Young Men's Christian Association of India and Ceylon, and the preface to the series states that 'in each case the religion described is brought into relation with Christianity'.³ The approach was typical of the comparative religion of the time, when Christianity was regarded as the normative truth to which all Oriental religions were compared, yet both missionaries would respect the narratives of the movements they studied. Walter provides a basic narrative taken from Ahmadiyya sources of the movement's early history; the work is significant, as the methodology employed resembles that of the contemporary academic study of religions, in that Walter states that his intention is to 'sketch the history and tenets of the Ahmadiyya movement, for the most part as its founder and his disciples have themselves conceived it, and to do it as far as I could in their own language'.⁴ Walter's main source is the movement's journal, *The Review of Religions*, founded in 1902. The early issues of the *Review* are an invaluable source, but in addition, today's scholars have the benefit of several translations in English of the founder's prolific writings. Walter acknowledges that pamphlets written by H. D. Griswold and the Reverend Thakur Dass⁵ were written at an earlier date, but these were polemical and written with the express intention of refuting the claim that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was the 'promised Messiah' who had come 'in the spirit and power of Jesus Christ', a claim that is equally problematic for the vast majority of Muslims.

Walter's sources are taken from Christian missionaries and followers of the movement who had been personally acquainted with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, along with the 'friendly' biography in Urdu written by Mi'raj-ud-Din and the fuller and later biography, *Bardhin-i-Ahmadiyya*, also in Urdu, by Mirza Yakub Beg that came out in 1916 from Qadian, and finally a memorial article that appeared in *The Review of Religions*.⁶ Today, there are many Ahmadiyya accounts of their origin, particularly the biographies by Dard and Adamson, but this internally commissioned literature remains essentially the same as the sources used by Walter.

There seems to be some dispute over the year of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's birth, with Walter accepting 1839, the same year that Ranjit Singh met his death, based

on the accounts of the early biographers. In a footnote, he comments that *The Review of Religions* had noted in various places 1836 or 1837, but some recent online articles assert 1835.⁷ The family were of *ashraf* class, owning lands surrounding Qadian, where Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born. It is likely that his Punjabi ancestors claimed foreign origin and were steeped in the Perso-Islamic culture described by Robinson. His father, Mirza Ghulam Murtaza a physician and a scholar, had observed his son's studious nature and employed a Persian tutor to educate him from the ages of six to ten. From then until he was seventeen, he was given a religious education primarily in Arabic. His teachers were from a variety of Islamic backgrounds and included Fazl Ilahi, a scholar of the Hanafi School of Law, followed by Fazl Ahmed, a member of the Ahl-i Hadith, and, at seventeen, he began to study with Gul Ali Shah of Batala, a Shi'a scholar.⁸

Stories of his youth indicate a very unworldly disposition. Mi'raj-ud-Din recounts some of these personal peculiarities. He states that Ahmad would walk the streets of Qadian with his pockets filled with sweets. The street urchins would steal them, but the distracted young man would remain blissfully unaware, proceeding innocently on his way. On another occasion, it is said that his clothes caught fire without his realizing it. A later story, which highlights his ongoing detachment from the world and his trust in the workings of Providence, relates how on one occasion his four-year-old son entered the room and set fire to all of his father's writings. Apparently Ahmad gave it no attention and merely remarked, 'There is some benefit from God in this'.

In spite of his unworldly disposition, his father found him a position in government service, in the office of the district commissioner at Sialkot, but soon realized that he had no interest in the work and tried to place him in law. This too met with serious resistance. However, he returned home and assisted his father in efforts to legally gain back the family estates lost to the Sikhs. After his father's death in 1876, there was no more pressure to pursue a career and Ahmad remained at home, furthering his studies in the Qur'an, Hadith and other Islamic texts, while also picking up a rudimentary knowledge of the world's major religions. During this period, his detachment from worldly affairs increased and his desire to live a life of Islamic piety won over all other considerations. Clearly these narratives of his early life form part of the hagiography of a future holy person and, in their way, are typical of the early signs believed to display themselves in such personalities, but there is no need to discount them entirely in view of his subsequent life story.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was not trained in a *dar al-ulum*, nor did he receive a British-influenced modern education. He was not apparently inspired by

the Shah-Wali-Allah-influenced revivalists or the Islamic modernists, yet he shared elements from both camps. He would agree with the former on the condemnation of devotional practices at the tombs of Sufis, the need for Islam to be purified of cultural practices not part of the original revelation, and a return to practices associated with Muhammad and his companions. He would concur with the latter on the need to work with the British authorities.¹⁰

According to his biographers, during those early years he became a significant scholar of Persian and Arabic, and in 1880, during his early forties, he published the first part of his most famous work, *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya* (*Ahmadiyya Proofs*), which was acclaimed by readers throughout the Muslim world as a masterly exposition of Muslim doctrine. During this period he also achieved a reputation for disputation with Christian missionaries and became somewhat of a champion for Islam among Punjabi Muslims feeling the pressure of British intellectual supremacy displayed in the rhetoric of the better-educated Christians and their converts.¹¹

These encounters with the missionaries formed a significant part of his relations with the West and will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4. They were also instrumental in his growing reputation as a defender of Islam. Mushirul Hasan identifies two main approaches used by Islamic thinkers to engage with and challenge the polemics of the Christian missionaries. He states that the developing literature in Urdu gave voice to anti-missionary feelings and demonstrated how seriously Indian Muslims perceived the Christian critique of Islam as a major threat to their identity. The first approach that he identifies is the challenge to Orientalist assumptions about Islam and uncritical examination of Muslim societies. He provides the example of Ameer Ali's *Spirit of Islam*, published in 1891 as a classic response of this kind to the Western world. The second approach he identifies is the voice of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, whose vast body of polemical literature he defines as part of the *munazira* tradition.¹² *Munazira* is defined as 'quarrelling', or a form of combat,¹³ and not all Muslim thinkers in India perceived it as a useful strategy. Nazir Ahmad, for example, believed that it invariably led to religious wars (*mujadila*).¹⁴ Yet, arguably, Ahmad's combative approach to Christianity chimed with the feelings of some late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Western seekers who were becoming highly critical towards Christianity and its claims to truth and would bring him to the attention of these individuals.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad would become a prolific writer in defence of Islam, writing more than ninety books on various religious, spiritual, theological and

moral issues, in most aspects according to an orthodox Hanafi position. Many of his books explicitly defend Islam against external, mainly Western, critique. His writings form a robust challenge to Christianity and are very different in tone to the classic *fiqh*-based literature more familiar to Muslim readers and so much a part of the Shah Wali-Allah-inspired reform. They were more in line with the kind of Islamic literature being produced by the prominent British converts of the period; for example, his articles defend Muslim divorce laws and gender separation (*purdah*) as solutions to sexual immorality, his interpretations of the Qur'an argue that the text calls for the abolition of slavery and he redefined *jihad* to exclude holy war.¹⁵

His growing reputation as a staunch defender of Islam would be marred by controversy when, on 4 March 1889, he announced a divine revelation awarding him the privilege to accept *bai'at*, an oath of allegiance acknowledging a formal relationship of teacher-student in the religious realm. The words of the *bai'at* are as follows:

When thou hast determined, put thine trust in Allah. And build the Ark under Our eyes, as commanded by our revelation. Verily, those who swear allegiance to thee indeed swear allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is over their hand.¹⁶

Before this revelation, Ahmad had written a 'Notice' that was extensively publicized, inviting those who so wished to come to take *bai'at*. The call for a more formal initiation was answered immediately by those who had already become followers, and the initiation took place in Ludhiana.¹⁷ *Bai'at* in itself was not problematic, as it was used in Sufi circles to establish the *shaikh-murid* (master-disciple) relationship, and in the context of Indian Islam was normative. In addition to the traditional oath of allegiance made to a shaikh on commencing discipleship or joining a Sufi *tariqa*, even the conservative Sunni reform movements of South Asia, such as the Deobandis, use *bai'at* to show loyalty to a particular scholar.¹⁸ The controversy was caused by Ahmad's claim that he was instructed by a divine revelation or command. Shortly thereafter, on 23 March, Ahmad further consolidated his activities by founding the Ahmadiyya movement,¹⁹ with the aim to revive and promote Islam in its pristine form as taught by the Prophet. There was little that was contentious in this, nor in his followers' claims that he was the *mujaddid* (divinely chosen reformer of the age) of the fourteenth Islamic century. Similar movements of Islamic reform had appeared throughout the nineteenth century in India and elsewhere, and the founders of such movements were often heralded by followers as *mujaddid*. Ahmad's response to the *bai'at* controversy was to state that Muslims had the capacity

for relationship with a living God who could not only answer their prayers but speak directly to any of his faithful. Even as early as 1882, when he published the second volume of *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*, he wrote:

O Ahmad, God has blessed thee ... Say, I am commanded to guide the world to the path of righteousness and I am the first to believe ... Help shall come to thee from men whose hearts Allah has himself prepared through revelation.²⁰

This proclamation suggests that he was at least the *mujaddid* of his time, but in 1891 he shocked his many supporters in Punjab Islam with the announcement that, in addition to the *mujaddid* of the age, he was both the 'promised Messiah' (*masih mau'ud*) expected by many of the world's faiths, particularly those focused on narratives in Christianity heralding the return of Jesus, and the Mahdi awaited by Muslims at the end time, even to a lesser degree, similar doctrines concerning the birth of the last incarnation of Vishnu in Hinduism. This position was defended in his three books *Fateh Islam*, *Tanzih-i-Mardm* and *Izdla-i-Auhdm*.

These claims would involve him in considerable confrontations with orthodox Muslims, leaders of the Hindu reform movement, the Arya Samaj and Christians. His understanding of Jesus's return was normatively Islamic (as opposed to the Christian understanding of the end time) but his view of Jesus's death differed from that of mainstream Muslims. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad argued that Jesus survived the crucifixion and died a normal death after living out his natural life in Kashmir, a series of events proved by the existence of a tomb in Srinagar. The holy man Yuz Asaf, buried at the Roza Bal shrine in Srinagar, is identified with Jesus.²¹ More controversially he claimed for himself that he was not Jesus returned in a literal sense, but rather the likeness of Isa (*mathil-i 'Isā*) in which he manifested the character and moral sensitivities of the last Israelite Prophet. In spite of these controversies, the movement expanded as Ahmad continued to defend Islam, outwardly conforming to Hanafi orthodoxy in matters of practice while simultaneously leading a campaign against the Christian missionaries that was certain to gain supporters in an environment where Indian Muslims keenly felt their changed circumstances. In addition, he advocated a peaceful promotion of Islam and argued for the inadmissibility of *jihad* as any form of military action in the modern era.

O Muslim scholars and maulavis! Listen to me. I tell you truly that this is not the time for jihad. Do not disobey God's Holy Prophet. The awaited Messiah has arrived and orders you to abstain from religious wars involving armed combat, killing and bloodshed. Not refraining even now from spilling blood and giving such sermons is therefore not the way of Islam. The person who accepts me will

not merely stop preaching in this way; rather, he will recognise the evil of this path and come to know that it invites God's anger.²²

His views on *jihad* would be welcomed by the British but would place him at odds with those *ulama* who still hoped that legitimate armed struggle would revive Muslim fortunes. Ahmad's declaration of the new provenance on *jihad* went far beyond Indian Muslim disagreements over armed struggle. First, it openly declared his prophetic claims, but it also led to the criticism that he collaborated with the British. In addressing the notification on *jihad* to the British government, even though the proclamation was made to the *ulama*, there is no doubt that Ahmad indicated his acceptance of the British rule in India. The reformed Islam heralded by the Ahmadiyya would be peaceful.

Alongside these claims of prophethood, a critique of contemporary Hindu movements and the condition of Christianity continued unabated. His view of both of these contemporary formations of older religions was always through the lens of orthodox Islam's understandings of other faiths. Ahmad did not spare Islam from his criticisms, or at least its current parlous state was blamed on sectarianism, saint worship, ritualism and the hard-heartedness of its adherents. The lifestyles of his contemporaries had fallen from the standards of Muhammad and his companions, and he accused them of indulgence, transgressions of the revealed law, intoxication, gambling and lacking the required effort to transform their fortunes.²³

His critique of the condition of Muslims was particularly aimed at the *ulama*, whom he accused of being in the same condition as the Jewish religious professionals, the scribes and Pharisees, at the time of Jesus. He would compare the political fortunes of the Jews under the yoke of Rome with those of Muslims dominated by European powers.²⁴ He would compare his own character with that of the Jewish messiah and Muhammad, eventually claiming to be a non-law-bearing prophet within Islam (*zilli nabi*) tasked with the mission to restore the final revelation to the pristine condition that had been revealed to and exemplified by Muhammad.²⁵

These claims would result in considerable controversy between Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and his growing group of followers, and orthodox Sunni and Shi'a understandings of Islam, where Muhammad remains unequivocally the final Prophet of God. The claim of being a 'shadow prophet' charged with reviving Islamic law and clearing away the corruptions (*bida*) that creep into a religion with the passage of time seemed to challenge the overriding Muslim doctrine of *khatam-i nabuwwat* (the Seal of the Prophets), in which Muhammad is the final messenger.²⁶

In particular, Ahmad would enrage the *ulama* of the Deobandi movement, who regarded themselves as the guardians of Sunni Islam in India, and these rival reformers would devote considerable energy to refuting his claims.²⁷ A number of *ulama* led the attack, including Muhammad Husain of Batala, Abd al-Hajj Ghaznavi of Amritsar, Nazir Husain of Delhi and Ahmad Allah of Amritsar.²⁸ Even some of his former Muslim supporters turned on him, particularly Maulvi Muhammad Husain, who, along with a number of other important Indian *ulama* selected to represent different strands of Sunni Islam, pronounced a *fatwa* declaring Ahmad and his followers to be outside the fold of Islam.²⁹ In turn, Ahmad denounced his enemies as opponents of his prophethood. He would argue that he had shown all the signs of being a chosen messenger, fulfilling all the prophecies associated with the return of Jesus, the coming of the Mahdi and the new incarnation of Krishna. He would claim that he had never failed the sincere seeker looking for a sign of his divinely given status, stating that he had 'shown more than one hundred and fifty supernatural signs, to which evidence is borne by millions of men, and anyone who demands a sign even now in earnest is not disappointed'.³⁰ In September 1891 he debated with the highly respected Nazir Husain, the leader of the Ahl-i Hadith, in the Jami'a Masjid of Delhi, an event that led to rioting in the mosque.³¹

Many of the signs to which Ahmad laid claim had to do with the death or humiliation of his main opponents. Most notable were his prophecies of the deaths of his two arch-enemies, Pandit Lekh Ram of the Arya Samaj and Abdulla Atham, a prominent Indian Christian, as well as, less often, Chiragh Din, an apostate from the Ahmadiyya ranks, and Dr John Alexander Dowie in America. The most definitive prophecy declared that Pandit Lekh Ram would die within six years, 'and the Id will be very near to it'. Four years after the prophecy appeared on 6 March, the day following Eid, the Pandit was stabbed to death. Some of these prophetic encounters will be explored in later chapters, as they are significant to comprehending Ahmad's strategic positioning towards the West, and Christianity in particular.

The two major biographies of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad are mainly concerned with incidents in his life that are deemed to demonstrate his claim to being a Prophet of God, and say little about the development of the Ahmadiyya movement.³² The work by Dard does provide some insight into the development of Qadian as the headquarters of the movement, and reveals some of the key followers who had become the mainstay of activities.³³ The criticism directed towards Ahmad did not appear to stem the growth of the movement. In December 1891, partly in response to criticisms from the Deobandi and

Ahl-i Hadith, a meeting of all those who remained loyal was called in Qadian, and it attracted only eighty followers. But in the following year, 500 attended.³⁴ In 1901, visitors to Qadian faced a difficult journey – there was no railway station, telegraph, electricity or telephone; nevertheless, the mission's activities were expanding the town. A minaret was added to the mosque built by Ahmad's father, and it had begun to attract attendees from the main cities of the Punjab during Eid ul-Fitr and Eid ul-Adha. The middle school had been developed as a high school, with a new boarding house opened in May 1900, recording 124 students at the end of that year. A hand-worked printing press was already at work producing *Al-Hakam*, the first newspaper of the movement, which had begun publication in 1897 under the editorship of Hadhrat Shaikh Yaqoob Ali Irfani.³⁵ Another newspaper, *Badr*, started publication in 1902, edited by Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq. These two periodicals played a pivotal role in preserving Ahmad's revelations, speeches and informal talks, besides recording many milestones in the early history of the Ahmadiyya.³⁶ On 15 January 1901, Ahmad issued instructions to begin an English-language monthly magazine with the primary objective of reaching the English-speaking populations of the world. The magazine, entitled *The Review of Religions*, although printed in Lahore, was published in Qadian. There was also an Urdu version.³⁷

On 9 September 1901, Ahmad issued a leaflet asking his followers to study his writings, especially *Fateh-e-Islam*, *Taudih-e-Maram*, *Izala'-e-Auham*, *Anjam-e-Athim* and *Surma Chashm Arya*,³⁸ telling them they would be formally examined on the contents. His intention was to prepare candidates for missionary work and to ensure that they would be able to field any questions from Christians, Muslims or Hindus. By this time, Dard declares, visitors were coming from far and wide, ranging between fifty and one hundred a day, including a handful of foreigners. He notes that 1,098 names were recorded as joining the movement, with the converts hailing from Orissa, Mysore, Hyderabad, Kashmir and Punjab.³⁹ Adamson claims that Ahmad stated that his followers numbered 30,000 in 1900, but the figure of 1,098 mentioned by Dard is also affirmed in *al-Hakam* in November 1900. In the same month, Ahmad called for his followers to declare themselves Ahmadiyya in the 1901 census and to perceive themselves as distinct from Sunni and Shi'a Muslims.⁴⁰

Progress was slow. The movement had begun with forty people taking the *bai'at* to Ahmad in March 1889 at Ludhiana. In 1896, the roll of followers was 313. By 1900, the larger crowds attending in Qadian led to the construction of several buildings for accommodation, which over the years



Figure 1 Mirza Ghulam Ahmad with early followers in Qadian circa 1910. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

became larger and more permanent. Adamson states that the early meetings were to determine the future of the Ahmadiyya as it remains until the present day. At one such meeting it was decided to support the first missionary, Sayyid Muhammad Ahsan, and to finance him by voluntary donation, and to begin the printing press. A little later, the decision was made to establish the school. Financial management was established through a system of regular donations based on income.⁴¹ Another meeting, in December 1892, laid out the goals of the movement as follows: to propagate Islam; to think out ways and means of promoting the welfare of new converts to Islam in Europe and America; to further the cause of righteousness, purity, piety and moral excellence throughout the world; to eradicate evil habits; and, finally, to appreciate with gratitude the good work of the British government.⁴² Thus it can be seen that even from the outset, one of the primary concerns was with Western Muslims.

Throughout this expansion, opposition and provocation were common. Perhaps this was to be expected, in view of Ahmad's claims to special divine favour. On 5 November 1901, Ahmad corrected the view of a follower who had denied that he was a prophet. In a leaflet entitled *Eik Ghalati Ka Izala*, he explained that all the stages of spiritual perfection were accessible based on the

Qur'anic verse Al-Nisa 4:70, including even prophethood. However, he stated that he was not an independent prophet or one who brought with him a new revelation or transformed certain aspects of a previous revelation. Ahmad's claims seem to have been based on an understanding of prophethood in which the individual is able to make prophesies concerning the future and can restore the revelation given to Muhammad.⁴³ This is not to say that he did not claim to be of perfected character as modelled on Muhammad and Jesus. Although this understanding of prophethood has resulted in some Muslim nations declaring the Ahmadiyya as heretics, as they would appear to deny the doctrine of the seal of prophethood, Ahmad was adamant that there was no revelation after Muhammad and that he remained a lover and follower of the Prophet of Islam. In his own words, he saw himself as the 'true and perfect image of the Holy Prophet'⁴⁴ entrusted by God to renew a fallen Islam, in which Muslims no longer lived according to the Revelation. If Ahmad had claimed to be a renewer (*mujadid*) or a perfected *awliya*, the controversy would surely have been less marked.

The demand that the Ahmadiyya in Pakistan be given the status of a non-Muslim minority was first voiced in May 1949 at an Ahrar meeting held at Pind Dadan Khan in Rawalpindi.⁴⁵ The Ahrar, or Majlis-e Ahrar-e Islam, was a conservative political party representing the Deobandi movement. Founded on 29 December 1929 at Lahore by Chaudhry Afzal Haq, Syed Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari, Habib-ur-Rehman Ludhianvi, Mazhar Ali Azhar, Zafar Ali Khan and Dawood Ghaznavi, the Ahrar was composed of Indian Muslims disillusioned by the Khilafat movement. Initially, the party had been associated with opposition to Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the establishment of an independent Pakistan. They were renowned opponents of the Ahmadiyya movement and campaigned for their expulsion from Islam. By the early 1930s, the Ahrar had become an important Muslim pressure group and political movement in the Punjab. They were particularly interested in the future of the princely states, especially Kashmir, and mobilizing Muslims on socio-religious matters.⁴⁶ Their demand for the expulsion of the Ahmadiyya from Islam is now confirmed as law in Pakistan.

In spite of the criticism by conservative Muslims, the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad conduct themselves as Muslims, acknowledge the Qur'an as the repository of the final revelation and, in practice, are orthodox. The declaration of a revelation (*ilham*) that he had been entrusted by God with a special mission to reform the *ummah* (*mamoor min-Allah*) is not without precedent, nor his receiving of *bai'at* from followers; even his proclamation of being the Mahdi had been made by other Muslim religious leaders. Doctrinally,

the key differences would be the narrative concerning Jesus's death and the Ahmadiyya view that violent jihad (*jihad bis-saif*) is no longer permitted in Islam, and only persuasion by argument is permitted. His proclamation of being *Maseel-i Isa*, or the promised messiah in the likeness of Jesus, is controversial among the majority of Muslims, as it goes against normative narratives of Jesus's return, in which he will descend from the heavens in bodily form and commence the last days. It is, however, the proclamation made in 1901 that Ahmad was *zilli nabi* (a true or perfect reflection of prophethood) that most separates the Ahmadiyya from other Muslims.⁴⁷ Yet arguably, the Ahmadiyya have made their own unique contribution to the age-old dilemma of Indian Muslims perceiving themselves as independent of the Arabs and others who conquered India. The Ahmadiyya are uniquely Indian, in that the founder claimed a prophethood that extended the Arabian revelation into India and that said the renewal of the world's spirituality would arise out of India. It is their view of the West, especially the British presence in India, and their strategies towards Christian missionaries in India that make them significant. They were the first Muslim organization to send missionaries to the West, and it was, in part, the differing opinions over how to promote Islam in Britain in the second decade of the twentieth century that would prove too much for the unity of the movement and split it into two distinct divisions. The next chapter will explore in detail the development of Ahmad's responses to Christian missionaries and his relationship towards the British in India.

Ahmadiyya Reactions to the British: Taking Islam to the West

The previous chapter provided a brief account of the Ahmadiyya and its founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, according to his early biographers. There was no attempt to dispute their narrative, as at this stage, the insider story of events needs to be recounted. My understanding is that the arrival of the movement at this point in India's history needs to be placed in the context of 'Islam in danger' explored in Chapter 2. Various reformers had advocated different positions on how to respond to the loss of Muslim power, and advocated the need for someone to respond to the crisis by leading a renaissance of Islam. The following chapter will explore how Mirza Ghulam Ahmad differed radically from other reformers in regard to the British presence in India and in his subsequent proactive missionary approach to the crisis presented by European domination. This chapter will explore Ahmad's attitudes towards British rule and his attacks on Christian missionaries, especially focusing on his use of challenges or duels, either in the defence of Islam or in his claim to special favour from God, and, in particular, his view that Islam's renaissance would arise in the West under his inspiration, spreading out from the capital city of the British Empire. As mentioned in the last chapter, two of the key aims of the movement were to think out ways and means of promoting the welfare of new converts to Islam in Europe and America and to appreciate with gratitude the good work of the British government. This chapter will show how the movement went about fulfilling these two central aims.

The reaction of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to the British may have been influenced by a number of factors. The family's attitude towards Sikh rule in Punjab was ambivalent and coloured by their circumstances. The title 'Mirza' used by the family head was bestowed on those of Mughal heritage in Indian Muslim society, and indicated someone of Ashraf class. The town of Qadian had been the capital of a small Muslim territory known as Islampur, and Ahmadiyya

accounts indicate that Ahmad's family had been rulers of the area prior to Sikh dominance in the Punjab. The land bequeathed to them had been lost with the expansion of Sikh rule after the time of Guru Gobind Singh.¹ The long-standing bitterness over these land holdings coloured the family's attitude towards Sikh rule, even though under Ranjit Singh (1780–1839) a portion of the property (five villages) had been returned to Ahmad's father and the family reinstated to some of its previous standing.² Ahmad's father had hoped to reclaim all the lost heritage, and part of the reason for his supporting his son entering the law may have arisen from his hope that Ahmad could prevail with the British authorities where he had failed with the Sikh. The family had supported the British during in the insurrection in 1857, a decision that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was very proud to acknowledge throughout his life.³ He stated that his father 'watched as anxiously for the advance of the British as a thirsty man looks for water' and he provided 'fifty horses at his own cost' as practical proof of his loyalty in 1857.⁴ It may appear that the family had a similar position as Sayyid Ahmad Khan, and it is certainly true that they shared a benign attitude towards the British presence in India and its social and political benefits. However, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad did not agree with Sayyid Ahmad Khan's version of Islamic modernism. Ahmad's position can be found detailed in *Barakatud Du'a* (*The Blessings of Prayer*), written in 1893. The differences can be summed up as the latter expressing the view that Islamic reforms needed to move closer to Western rationality, whereas the former was always clear that the West needed to embrace Islam and its divine truths.⁵ Ahmad's position was much closer to the impassioned conviction of Victorian converts to Islam, such as Alexander Webb (1846–1916) and Abdullah Quilliam (1856–1932), who both believed in the Islamization of the West,⁶ and this would eventually draw him into their orbit when his missionaries would actively seek to bring the West to Islam.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's relationship with the West was far from straightforward. Although he may have understood the doctrinally embedded relationship with Christians as *ahl-i kitab* (people of the book), he also accepted the vital truth of the revelation given to Muhammad, that Islam replaced the former faiths of Judaism and Christianity, and as he came to accept his own role as divinely guided, he felt the burden of restoring Islam to its pre-eminence over the two older monotheistic religions. His ambivalence about Christianity was felt most towards the British missionaries arriving in India in greater numbers and their impact on Muslim conversion.⁷

The fledgling Ahmadiyya movement shared the same locality as the main concentration of Christian missionaries in the Punjab. From the time of British

annexation of the province, both English and Scottish missionaries had been establishing themselves in the towns of central Punjab: Lahore, Sialkot, Jalandhar and Amritsar.⁸ The latter had become the headquarters for the Anglican Church Missionary Society, which had created churches, schools and a hospital in the city and its surrounding areas. The head of the Amritsar Medical Mission of the Church Missionary Society, Dr Henry Martyn Clark, was to become a well-known opponent of Islam and a major disputant with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Not only had the presence of Christian missionaries become more significant in the Punjab, their tactics of conversion had transformed. Between 1881 and 1901, the Christian population of the Punjab had increased from 5,000 to 42,000.⁹ According to Avril Powell, some missionaries had also noted that the census data appeared to indicate a relative rise of Muslims in the region and suggested that Christian missionary activity should be directed towards the places where this demographic trend was most noticeable.¹⁰ The missionaries were no longer maintaining their activities primarily among urban educated elites, but by the 1880s had concentrated with considerable success on low-caste, outcast and illiterate rural villagers. The two strategies of missionary endeavour went hand-in-hand, able to be resourced by the growing number of Indian clergy recruited from among the converted.¹¹ Perhaps the most significant element of these new Indian clergy in the Punjab was the number of such figures who had formerly been Muslims and were prepared to attack Islam from the position of some knowledge of its doctrines and practices.¹² Several of these former Muslim Indian clerics were to bear the brunt of the 'holy war' that was to ensue between the Amritsar missionaries and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The term 'holy war', or *Jang i Muqaddas*, was first used by Henry Martin Clark in the proceedings of the Amritsar debate with Ahmad, and was used as the title for the debate itself in the Muslim account.¹³ Sayyid Mir Hussan acted as a referee in some of the debates with Christian and Hindu scholars and suggested that the *mubahala* (contest or challenge in which the unjust party were cursed by God)) that became an established methodology in Ahmad's later life was utilized even earlier.¹⁴

In Ahmad's early life, he had come to know some missionaries of the Church of Scotland in Sialkot and passed long hours in discussion with them on religious matters. The first occasion of these conversations would have been between 1864 and 1867, when Ahmad worked in the Sialkot court. Ahmad mentions that he had a friendship with the Reverend John Taylor (1837–1868)¹⁵ and that they discussed all aspects of Christianity, including the divinity of Jesus Christ. According to Ahmad's account, the other Scottish missionaries were annoyed at this friendly contact with a Muslim,

especially as some of their own conversations with Ahmad had been more confrontational.¹⁶

In spite of the personal friendship with John Taylor, it was this aggressive stance of the missionaries in imperial India towards Islam that most irritated Muslims, and the *ulama* were anxious to devise successful responses to it. It was difficult to fervently believe that Islam was the final revelation when the better-educated Christian missionaries outwitted them again and again in the polemical debates on religious truths. Particularly aggravating were the Indian Christians of Muslim background, who were able to engage in the streets and bazaars with their theological training and insider awareness of Islam.¹⁷

The Jews were not numerically a matter of concern in India, but they would supply Ahmad with a comparison to formulate his relations with the British in India. Ahmad would argue that the Jews had been a subject people under the power of Rome just as Indian Muslims were now under the yoke of the British. As Jesus, a Jewish prophet, had not sought to encourage rebellion against the Roman authorities, so Muslims were advised to maintain good relations with the new rulers. The parallel was also useful in his prophetic claim, in that, as Jesus had been dragged before a Roman tribunal, so had Ahmad been summoned before the English courts several times. Ahmad saw his messianic role in comparison to Jesus and would therefore implore Muslims to renounce violence. He would use the label 'Jews' to indicate those who opposed Jesus, the 'worldly' or 'ungodly', and argued that the same kind of people would oppose him as the final messiah able to reach out to all religions.¹⁸

Although Ahmad was aggressive in his response to the Christian missionaries, his response differed from most other Muslim responses to the presence of the British in India, in that he considered the Raj to be more benign than other possible rulers of India and he encouraged Indian Muslims to be loyal to the empire. In a pamphlet entitled 'A Revealed Cure for the Bubonic Plague' published in 1898, he praises the British governance in India as 'Our Benign Government which is always sympathetic and kind-hearted towards its subjects'¹⁹ and notes that its plans to prevent the spread of the plague had been 'looked upon with suspicion in some quarters and [had] also been opposed by some ignorant people'.²⁰ He argues that this reaction is wrong, 'as it is the duty of all loyal and faithful subjects to support the Government in all measures based on good intention'.²¹ In 1900 he called for loyalty to the British and suggested that many of the *ulama* were not so approving of British rule.²² It can be surmised that Ahmad saw this as an opportunity to strike at his opponents among the Indian *ulama*.

It is in his letter to Queen Victoria on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee that the full extent of his position with regard to the empress and the empire is seen. He perceives the monarch as blessed by God and the empire as one in which 'a spiritual system should be established with His own hand from Heaven',²³ going on to state that 'Almighty God, has with His perfect grace and wisdom, established the rule of Her Majesty in this and other countries, so that the earth may be filled with peace and justice'.²⁴ Ahmad would link Victoria's just reign to his own prophetic mission to renew Islam.

If the ruler be well-intentioned and have the welfare of his subjects at heart, then when he has done his best to spread goodness and peace, and his sympathetic heart longs to see a pure transformation worked in his subjects, the grace of God comes into motion on Heaven and a great spiritual reformer is sent on earth to give effect to his noble desires.²⁵

The unique feature of this mission was his conviction that Islam would be renewed in the West. His call was distinct in that he believed that his renewal of the prophetic path that had been finalized with Muhammad would not be spearheaded in the Muslim world. In 1892 he published *Izala-i Auham* and included a *kashf*²⁶ relating to the future spread of his movement in England. The contents are key to understanding the Ahmadiyya impulse to send missionaries to London and elsewhere.

The rising of the sun from the West (as predicted by the Holy Prophet of Islam) means that Western countries, which have for centuries been in the darkness of disbelief and error, shall be illumined by the sun of righteousness, and shall share in the blessings of Islam. I once saw myself (in a vision) standing in a pulpit in London and delivering a reasoned speech in English on the truth of Islam and thereafter catching several white-feathered birds sitting on small trees, whose bodies resembled those of partridges. I understood this to mean that though it may not be given to me to proceed personally to London, my writings would be published among those people and many righteous Englishmen would fall a prey to the truth.²⁷

Ahmad's prophesy can be understood as part of the new awakening of Indians' awareness of their contribution to world civilization and a change in the response to the missionary rhetoric of the superiority of Christianity and the British message of cultural and scientific domination of the Indian 'native'. The remainder of the *kashf* addresses this reassertion of the Orient's place in the world's spiritual history.

Western countries have so far not been conspicuous for their attachment to spiritual truths, as if, God had bestowed spiritual wisdom on the East only, and

wisdom of the world on Europe and America. All prophets from the first to the last have appeared in Asia, and, spiritual men, other than the prophets, who attained nearness to God have also been confined to the Eastern peoples.²⁸

Vivekananda (1863–1902), the Hindu missionary, who spoke at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, would echo a similar strategic response with his utterance, ‘the East walks on a long spiritual leg, whilst the West walks on a long material leg’²⁹ For India’s Muslims, Ahmad’s response to the West had a special poignancy. When this *kashf* was published, many Muslims in India were feeling the weight of Christian critique, as the dominance of Western civilization appeared to verify the missionary claim that Islam would be completely overwhelmed by Christianity in the course of the next hundred years.³⁰ The overwhelming intellectual Muslim response had been to write apologia in which Muslim practices and doctrines scorned by European critics were reformulated or justified to demonstrate that the real truths of Islam could meet with European approval.³¹

Ahmad’s response was twofold. On the one hand, he professed loyalty to the Raj, based on his belief that the British were just rulers; on the other hand, he vociferously challenged any suggestion that Islam was backward or superstitious. However, he was not blind to the condition that Islam found itself in and had permitted the loss of power to the Christian Europeans. Like many at the time, he was a revivalist. He considered that the revelation given to the Prophet had been, first and foremost, neglected and corrupted by Muslims themselves, and therefore any solution should begin with a reawakening of Islam. It was not to be found in copying the ways of the imperial conquerors. Islam was to be the solution for the Christian and Hindu worlds, but first required that Muslims cleanse their own house.³²

Ahmad’s challenge to the current state of Christianity can be demonstrated in his writings. In *The Fountain of Christianity (Chashma-e-Masih)* written in March 1906, in response to a book written by a Christian purporting that the Qur'an does not demonstrate any new teachings and that Muhammad merely copied the narratives from past scriptures, Ahmad raises his concerns about the authenticity of the Christian Gospels. He refutes the doctrines of Trinity and Atonement held by Christians, and argues that these beliefs have nothing to do with the teachings of Jesus.³³ To a Muslim who wrote to him in doubt about the truths of Islam after the same Christian’s attack on the Qur'an, he writes:

I am surprised that you have begun to harbour doubts about Islam on account of the falsehood and deceit spread by people whose God (Christ) is dead, whose

religion is dead, whose book is dead, and who are themselves dead for they lack the spiritual eye.³⁴

There is nothing unusual in Ahmad's attacks on Christian anti-Islamic polemic, other than that it takes a much more combative tone than the apologia issued by many Indian Muslim writers, and it shows Ahmad's conviction that Islam is a living faith, that is, one that still maintains an open door to divine communication. In the same response he writes: 'Since they do not possess the light which descends from heaven in support of the truth, and distinguishes a true religion through repeated testimonies, they are forced to employ all kinds of deceit, fabrication and fraud to alienate people from the living faith – Islam.'³⁵ In some ways it echoes the discomfort that some Christians were beginning to feel in regard to the authorship of the Bible, a point made by Ahmad himself in the introduction to the same work.

There was really no need for me to write about the beliefs of the Christian clergymen, for, in these days, their own renowned scholars in Europe and America have taken this task upon themselves – one which should have actually been performed by us. Nonetheless, they are doing a wonderful service by revealing the truth about Christianity.³⁶

Ahmad's tone towards Christian clerics and their attacks on Islam is similar to that of Abdullah Quilliam, preaching the message of Islam in Britain during the same period. Many of the British converts to Islam attracted by Quilliam's promotion of Islamic belief and practice had been active Christians.³⁷ They would feel that Victorian Christianity was plagued by sectarianism and its active endorsement of class hierarchies, but the most serious challenges were coming from new discoveries in biblical studies that threatened traditional doctrines concerning the Bible's divine origins, and the discoveries of science that brought into doubt literal understandings of the biblical accounts of the world's origins.³⁸ New scientific knowledge and intellectual advances in the study of the Bible challenged Christian doctrines and shook Christian beliefs. Changing moral sensibilities meant that certain traditional doctrines, such as the belief in everlasting punishment, were becoming unacceptable.³⁹ Abdullah Quilliam would draw effectively on these crises in Christianity to show the bankruptcy of previous revelations and the supremacy of Islam. Ahmad's approach would echo these prominent Muslim converts and was equally harsh on the condition of contemporary Christianity.

In the second and earlier work, written in 1896, *Sirajuddin 'Isa'i Kei Char Sawaloní Ka Jawab* (*Four Questions by Mr. Sirajuddin, a Christian, and Their*

Answers), Ahmad responds to four questions sent to him by an Indian Christian from Lahore:

1. According to Christian belief, Jesus' mission in this world was to show his love for mankind and to sacrifice his life for their sake. Can the mission of the Founder of Islam be said to possess both these qualities, or can it be described in better terms than 'love' and 'sacrifice'?
2. If the aim of Islam is to guide mankind towards *Tauhid*, why in its early period did it wage Jihad against the Jews while their revealed books only teach the Unity of God; or why should it now be considered essential for the Jews and those who already believe in the Unity of God to become Muslims in order to attain salvation?
3. Which verses of the Holy Quran specifically speak of man's love for God, or of God's love for man, using the very word 'love'?
4. Jesus spoke of himself thus: 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.' 'I am light.' 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' Did the Founder of Islam ever speak of himself in these terms?⁴⁰

There are two key elements to be teased out in Ahmad's detailed answers. The first is his robust defence of Islamic doctrine, affirming its superiority over the two previous Abrahamic religions, even ridiculing the Christian doctrine of Atonement and describing it as 'accursed'.⁴¹ He affirms the incomparability of the Qur'an over the Gospels and the Torah, stating:

The Torah, for instance, laid great emphasis on revenge and retribution because this was the need of the time, while the Gospel stressed forgiveness and forbearance. The Holy Qur'an, on the other hand, teaches us to consider the circumstances before choosing one or the other. In all other aspects too, the Torah inclines to one extreme and the Gospel to the other, while the Holy Qur'an teaches appropriateness and enjoins actions according to the needs of time and place.⁴²

Although there is nothing doctrinally original in these responses, it is Ahmad's ability to take the attack to the missionaries, challenging them to respond to the truths of Islam, and the erudite manner of his answers that appear to present the religion as more reasonable and less extreme than the two earlier revelations. His knowledge of the Qur'an and the theological underpinnings of Islam's opponents would raise the spirits of a demoralized Muslim population in the Punjab. Ahmad took the challenge to the missionaries. Sometimes this challenge took the form of a direct exhortation to meet him and thrash it out in a head-to-head

debate, in which he accused the missionaries of lacking courage, fearing defeat at the hands of the defender of Islam.

If they really believe that the Torah or the Gospels contain wisdom and truth, and manifest the excellences of the Divine Word in the most perfect way, I am ready to offer them a reward of five hundred rupees in cash if they can produce from their voluminous books, which are about seventy in number, the same truths and verities of the Law, the well-organized and well-arranged pearls of wisdom and knowledge, and excellences of the Divine Word, which we present from *Surah Al-Fatiha*... Is there a Christian clergyman courageous enough to take up this challenge?⁴³

The approach to the Christian missionaries and those within the Muslim world who denied his mission was identical. Ahmad was to issue a number of such challenges to Muslim opponents. A typical challenge was published in *The New York Times* in 1899.

BACKS FAITH WITH HIS LIFE.
East Indian Wants to Prove Mohammed's Greatness.

LONDON, Dec. 2.—A curious proposition has been made to Lord Curzon of Kedleston, the Viceroy of India, by Mirza Ahmad, a well-known Mohammedan of Kadian. He wants the British Government to call a public conference of all the religions and submit them to competitive examination under two demonstrations of the sublimity of their moral teachings and an outward sign of Divine support by the performance within a year of some miracle transcending all human limits.

If he fails to prove that Mohammed was greater than all others, Ahmad offers to submit to crucifixion.

The New York Times

Published: December 3, 1899

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The paper had picked up on a report of a challenge issued to the viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, but Ahmad was to go further and invite Queen Victoria to embrace Islam. His two invitations to the empress of India elucidated his approach to the truth of Islam and its superiority over Christianity, but also

his conviction that British rule was the best possible option for India. The first appeal to Victoria was made in his book *A'ina Kamalat-e-Islam*, published in February 1893. The work was the first to be published from the printing press set up in Qadian in August 1892. Fourteen hundred copies were produced in the first print run. The book ran to 700 pages, including an Arabic section of around 250 pages that introduces Ahmad's mission to Muslims of other nations.⁴⁴

The pages preceding the invitation to Victoria to accept Islam consist of an appreciation of the British presence in India, but Ahmad goes on to say:

O gracious and glorious Queen! I am surprised that in spite of thy great grace, knowledge and insight thou knowest not the religion of Islam and that thou dost not study it with the eyes with which thou studiest the affairs of thy state.⁴⁵

The actual invitation to embrace Islam is as follows:

O Queen of the Earth! Accept Islam and thou wilt be safe. Be a Muslim, God will provide for thee until the last day and He will save thee and protect thee from thy enemies.⁴⁶

The second invitation to the monarch was made on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee in 1897. *Tufya-e-Qaisariyya* was published in Qadian in 1897. A special bound copy was sent to Queen Victoria in commemoration of the Jubilee. Further copies were sent to the viceroy and the lieutenant governor of the Punjab.⁴⁷ On this occasion, Ahmad congratulates the queen for the peace, freedom and security her rule has brought to India but is unequivocal concerning her need to convert. On this occasion he does not petition the queen directly, but prays on her behalf to Allah.

O Almighty God! Thou art All-Powerful. We make bold to beseech Thee that Thou mayest so turn the heart of our gracious Queen that she may give up all creature worship and see the light of Islam. Let her believe in the One God and His Messenger Muhammad, till the end of her days.⁴⁸

Ahmad's position is clear. He will not compromise with attempts by the Christian missionaries to convert Muslims in India or critique their faith; on the contrary, it is the Christians who need to recognize Islam as the final revelation. In order to achieve this, he will take Islam to the Western world, a reverse mission. Yet he does this not because the British are enemies of Islam or India, but because their benevolence should be rewarded. He goes further and expresses his view that the empress of India is a protector of Muslims and their holy places, and as such should not be rebelled against. The empire was not only benign, but favourable towards Muslims and the practice of their faith, and as such deserved allegiance.

We have been the recipients of many gifts from her Majesty the Queen. How can we ever forget them or express thanklessness about them. Allah does not like it when His servants are thankless for those who have done favours on them. There is no doubt that the Empress of India is a source of strength for the Muslims and is a protector of the holy places of Islam.⁴⁹

In both messages to the queen, Ahmad elaborates on the Islamic position with regard to Jesus (Isa). In his view, the Christian position on Jesus's divinity and the orthodox account of the Crucifixion are the inherent weaknesses of Christianity, and his critique of these positions is robustly presented for the monarch's deliberations. In the first book, Ahmad places his own authority on the line and offers himself as proof of the truth of Islam. He challenges the queen to recognize the signs given to him: 'Wouldst thou care to see my signs and the proof of my truth and rectitude, out of fear of the Day of Resurrection'.⁵⁰

It is unlikely that such challenges or invitations to Islam directed towards major figures in the Raj or even to the empress of India from an unknown Muslim reformer in the rural areas of north-west India would receive much attention from the British administration or bring the challenger to the notice of fellow Muslims worldwide. However, locals who challenged Christian missionaries would gradually develop a reputation for combativeness and a refusal to lie down in the face of European criticisms of Islam. Ahmad's method of criticism was both robust and direct. It drew upon two methodologies of critique: first *tahqiqi*, which literally means 'research-based' in Arabic but is generally used in Islamic discourse to refer to certain or verified faith as opposed to blind belief.⁵¹ In this case, the term does not refer to evidence-based research as in science. Rather, it refers to an argument that is thorough and based on appropriate reading of the sources and logic, and is scholarly in its propositions. Ahmad would make the most use of this methodology in his comparison of Islam with the teachings of other religions, most notably Christianity. The second, *ilzami*, literally means 'accusing' and is used in arguments to refer to an answer or reply that aims at leaving one's opponents speechless by way of a quick, abrupt response. This usually is achieved by bringing to light some aspect of the opponent's own belief that could entail a similar allegation as the one he used against you. Ahmad would use both to great effect in his writings and speeches, although he was suspicious that the *ilzami* method would provoke a reaction from serious enquirers that would suggest that the question had no real answer or that the implied criticism contained in the question could have no appropriate response.⁵² Even more provocative was his use of challenges and prophecy. Challenges could

come in the form of traditional *mubahasa* (public religious debate)⁵³ or in the use of the printing press to respond promptly to Christian tracts. More controversially, Ahmad would challenge his opponents to a prophetic duel in which each protagonist would declare the other's death or similar curse (*mubahala*). By the mid-nineteenth century, both Muslims and Hindus were issuing challenges to Christian missionaries to meet them in debate. Powell describes the terms of such debates as taking place in public spaces such as schools, church halls and even outside in marketplaces or along riverbanks. She notes that the preliminaries to such debates were complex, with private meetings and correspondence taking place to ensure that no advantage might be given to either side.⁵⁴ This intricate complexity is marked in the terms of the debates between Ahmad and various missionaries.

Ahmad's writings and lecture tours would attract the attention of a number of Christian missionaries, both British and their Indian converts. The majority of contacts with such missionaries would appear to be in his native Punjab. Among the missionaries mentioned as significant in the narrative of Ahmad's life are three Indian converts, Imam-ud-Din, Thakur Das and Abdullah Athim, and the Afghan-born adopted son of the Reverend Robert Clark, Dr Henry Martyn Clark.⁵⁵ According to Powell, Henry Martyn Clark was born in Peshawar to Afghan parents but was adopted when he was three days old by the Anglican missionary. He was sent to Edinburgh for his education and graduated in medicine from Edinburgh University. He returned to Amritsar in 1882 to assist his father's mission.⁵⁶

The first three missionaries had warned against the influence of Ahmad in the 19 March, 2 April and 16 April 1885 issues of *Nur Afshan*.⁵⁷ Although they tried to play down his significance, in 1887 they reopened their antagonism towards him with a series of articles published in four consecutive issues from January to April. Imam-ud-Din (1830–1903) was a convert from Islam, baptized by the Reverend Robert Clark in Amritsar in 1864 and celebrated by local Christians, as he was a *maulvi* from a noted family of Islamic scholars. He was particularly harsh on Islam and had already taken part in a debate in Amritsar challenging local *maulvis*. In his books *Tarikh-e Muhammadi* and *Hidayatul Muslimin* he not only criticized the religion but dismantled the character of Muhammad. His attacks on the Prophet and Islam had received some notoriety, and even the Hindu media had protested against his demonization of the religion. Some Christians were also uneasy towards his methodology and considered his style of writing to be abusive.⁵⁸ In 1893 he published *Tauzinul-Aqwal*, not only critiquing Islam but focusing his ire on Ahmad and accusing him of disloyalty towards the

government. Ahmad responded with the publication of *Nural Haq* in 1893, in which he directly responds to the criticisms of Islam made in *Tauzinul-Aqwal*.⁵⁹ In the first part of the book, he answers the accusation of disloyalty towards the British governance of India. His response is revealing. Ahmad proclaims his loyalty to Victoria, but also articulates that the British rule of India is under the protection of Allah as long as he is alive.

I would not write any book without mentioning the blessings of the reign of Queen Victoria, for which all Muslims ought to be grateful to her ... It is our duty according to our religion ... I have a right to say that I am like a shield for the British Government to protect it from calamities. God has told me that He will not let harm come to it while I am with it.⁶⁰

One rather unusual way that Ahmad publicly challenged the Christian missionaries was through the use of monetary prizes in debates with him. The competitions and the prize money would be advertised in the local media to provide maximum publicity. The Christians were placed in a difficult position. If they refused the challenge, it would appear as if they were afraid of defeat. If they accepted, they not only gave Ahmad credence, but also risked a public contest pitting the truths of Christianity against the truths of Islam with a skilled adversary and an audience. His first public challenge was an open question to all followers of Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism to produce more quotations concerning truthfulness from their sacred texts than he could find in the Qur'an. A prize of 500 rupees was offered to anyone who could. The challenge was ignored.⁶¹

Ahmad's decision to defend Islam against any criticism or to defend Islamic doctrines seems to have been influenced by an incident in which the Christian owner of a printing press reported him to the authorities for sending an article with the package open at both ends. The package carried a lower rate of postage, but it also contained a letter of instruction, which could have been deemed an infringement of post office regulations.⁶² As a result of the denouncement, Ahmad was summoned to appear in court on the charge of defrauding the post office. Ahmad went, against the advice of his lawyer, and won the case.⁶³ The issue is not the nature of the case, which was rather petty, although it carried a maximum sentence of six months' imprisonment, but that the Christian printer took the opportunity to expose Ahmad to the authorities and destroy his reputation.

Another significant case draws attention to the issue of prophecy, also used strategically by Ahmad in his challenges. In May 1888, Ahmad was staying in Batala, where he was visited by a Christian missionary named Fateh Masih. On

Friday 18 May, the missionary declared to Ahmad, in front of an audience of around fifty Muslims and Hindus gathered together, that his prayers were also directly answered by God and that he also received revelations that accurately foretold the future.⁶⁴ On this occasion the missionary challenged Ahmad with regard to the respective accuracy of the two men's prophecies. The Christian newspaper *Nur Afshan* was suggested as the place for the respective prophesies to be published.⁶⁵ The date 21 May was put forward for the two adversaries to meet in public and announce their prophetic utterances. At the meeting, the Christian missionary appeared to back out of the challenge. He declared that he was not the recipient of divine revelation but only made the claim to show the public that Ahmad was equally incapable of such a direct relationship with God. The meeting dispersed after the missionary was publicly censured and humiliated for making false claims.⁶⁶

The consequence of the missionary's loss of face was an announcement by Ahmad that he would stay in Batala until the end of that year's Ramadan and would welcome any Christian missionaries who wanted to come and discuss with him.⁶⁷ A leaflet was published and distributed on 24 May to announce this challenge, more specifically targeting the British missionary the Reverend Herbert Stanton, who was in charge of the Christian Mission in Batala.⁶⁸ Reverend Stanton had been informed of the meeting between Fateh Masah and Ahmad. A challenge was directed to the district missionary that if he openly admitted that Christians no longer possessed the power of prophecy, Ahmad would be prepared to make prophetic utterances of an extraordinary nature. If he failed, he would offer the missionary 300 rupees for wasting his time.⁶⁹ If, however, the prophetic utterances from Ahmad were really of a divine character, the *Nur Afshan* would publish them along with an undertaking by the missionary to embrace Islam.⁷⁰ The British missionary did not respond and departed for Simla. On 7 June the deflated Fateh Masih proposed another challenge in *Nur Afshan*. He declared that four questions should be sealed in an envelope in a public place and Ahmad challenged to name the questions.⁷¹ Ahmad accepted the challenge in a leaflet published in Amritsar on 9 June.⁷² However, he stipulated that the discredited Fateh Masih had already demonstrated a level of untrustworthy behaviour and that Reverend Stanton should issue the challenge. Ahmad declared that within ten weeks he would name the questions, and once more he issued the challenge that if he was correct, the missionary should convert to Islam, or alternatively pay 1,000 rupees to the Anjuman Himayat-e Islami in Lahore.⁷³ No one came forward to answer the challenge. The challenges to Reverend Stanton would suggest that Ahmad was not satisfied with the

challenges issued to Indian converts, but wanted to take the battle directly to the foreign missionaries in charge of the Christian stations. A far more significant encounter would take place with the Reverend Henry Martyn Clark in 1897.

The Christian missionary worked in Amritsar and, in August 1897, brought a case against Ahmad before the district magistrate there. The case was far more serious than the incident with the post office. Henry Martyn Clark declared that Ahmad had sent a youth named Abdul Hamid to murder him. A warrant was issued for his arrest, but the case never came before the Amritsar court, as it had no jurisdiction.⁷⁴ The case was transferred to Gurdaspur. The district magistrate of Gurdaspur was under pressure from Henry Clark to proceed quickly, on the grounds that he was ill and that the witness would be tampered with.⁷⁵ The case began on 10 August 1897 in Batala, but right from the beginning the chief magistrate, Captain M. W. Douglas, later to become chief commissioner of the Andaman Islands, seemed unhappy with the testimony of the key witness, Abdul Hamid; but more to the point, he seemed less than satisfied with the Christian missionary's involvement with the witness.⁷⁶ In his summary of the evidence, the chief magistrate noted that Abdul Hamid had 'been kept entirely under the supervision of certain sub-ordinate [Indian] Christians belonging to the CMS service' throughout the trial period.⁷⁷ He goes on to state, 'I noticed that the longer he remained under the care of the mission subordinates at Batala, the more profuse and detailed his evidence became'.⁷⁸ The chief magistrate concluded, after hearing the key witness's statement, that 'the inferences were, either that he was being coached by some person or persons, or that he knew much more than he had so far revealed'.⁷⁹

As a consequence of suspicion, the chief magistrate submitted the youth to further interrogation by the district superintendent of police. Finally, Abdul Hamid broke down and confessed that he had lied throughout the trial as a result of coaching by someone in the mission, where he had been closely guarded for several days and had even considered suicide. A full statement was made by Abdul Hamid exonerating Ahmad and laying the blame on coercion by subordinates at the mission.⁸⁰ It is clear that Ahmad's defence of Islam against the local Christians was becoming a serious irritant.

In another example deserving of mention, Ahmad chose the bishop of Lahore as his adversary. On 18 May 1900, Bishop George Alfred Lefroy (1854–1919) induced a reaction from Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, a close follower of Ahmad. The mufti had responded to a comment made by the bishop at a public gathering in Lahore. The bishop had claimed that Jesus was the only innocent messenger of God. The mufti responded that all the prophets of God were innocent and

sinless.⁸¹ Ahmad would intervene by publishing two *ishtihars* on 25 May, both translated into English. They were distributed the same day at a public function at Rang Mahal to be addressed by the bishop.⁸² Around 3,000 people were at the gathering, where the bishop was requested to respond to the contents of the leaflets. He declined. Ahmad had declared Muhammad to be the only living Prophet on the basis that Muslim prayers were still answered, miracles still took place and no other religion showed such signs of life.⁸³ In the second leaflet, the bishop's method of comparing religions was challenged on the grounds that the understanding of sin differed from religion to religion. Any discussion of innocence or sinlessness was therefore redundant.⁸⁴

Ahmad challenged the bishop to hold a discussion with Muslims on the spiritual influence and exemplary behaviour of their respective founders.⁸⁵ Local Muslims also requested that the bishop meet with Ahmad and respond to five questions: 1) Which of the two prophets can be shown to be innocent? 2) Which of them can be shown to deservedly be called the living prophet and to possess divine power? 3) Which of them can deservedly be called an intercessor? 4) Which of the two religions can be called the living faith? 5) Of the teachings inculcated in the Bible and the Qur'an, which is the more excellent and natural?⁸⁶ The contest would be held under certain conditions, namely that one day should be allocated to each question; three hours would be given each day to the respective parties to defend their position; and, when providing proofs from their sacred texts, it would not be permitted to attack the book or prophet of the other. The contest was to take place in Lahore. It would be written down and published without alteration.⁸⁷

The bishop declined the invitation. The issuing of such challenges under certain conditions binding on both contestants was typical of Ahmad's combative approach in dealing with the missionaries. The most famous example of such a challenge was one issued by the Christian mission in Amritsar and not by Ahmad. Henry Martyn Clark, already known as an opponent of Islam, challenged the local *ulama* around Amritsar to a *mubahasa* in 1893.⁸⁸ He both chaired and acted as spokesperson for the Christian community.⁸⁹ This debate was published as a book in 1895.⁹⁰ At first the *ulama* seemed reluctant to respond. Imad-ud-din and other Indian clergy acted as scribes. Abdullah Athim, known beyond the Punjab for his debates with prominent Delhi *ulama* concerning his doubts of Islam and his erudite publications in Urdu that were circulated among educated Muslims and Europeans, initially acted as spokesperson for the Christians.⁹¹ He was a well-known writer of anti-Islamic tracts used for missionary activity. Although there was local hostility from the more orthodox Sunni

ulama towards Ahmad, he was chosen to represent Islam. Powell suggests that the choice indicated the level of insecurity among Muslim leaders as a result of the mass conversions taking place in the region.⁹²

The key issues of discussion were the divinity of Christ, the superiority of respective scriptures, the doctrine of Atonement and jihad. Ahmad chose to argue that Christians had misunderstood their own sacred texts rather than focusing on contemporary biblical scholarship that undermined the divine origin of Christian revelation. This may have been a deliberate strategy to ensure that the common people were able to emote with the issues in a language they were familiar with.⁹³ Both sides were to draw upon the language of holy war,⁹⁴ but Ahmad clearly perceived jihad as no longer including physical violence, but a polemical struggle between the two religions with a revived Islam re-emerging as the ultimate victor under his inspired leadership.⁹⁵ He would refer to this holy war as a spiritual battle that would 'break the power of the Cross'⁹⁶

Throughout the debate, Ahmad would attempt to transform the terms of the *mubahasa* into a *mubahala*; here the challenge went beyond argumentation and became a supernatural contest in which God would perform a miracle for his chosen religion. Ahmad's terms of engagement were that God would curse the spokesperson who spoke 'falsehood'. On the fourth day, and in an intellectual stalemate, Ahmad proposed the withdrawal of the two spokespersons in favour of a contest of miracles involving divine intervention.⁹⁷ The Christians were drawn into the challenge and insisted that Ahmad should cure three chronic patients of a local hospital.⁹⁸ On the fifteenth and final day, Ahmad announced his powers of prophecy and asserted that God had granted him a promise. He declared:

God gave me a sign by way of a vision that, from among the two parties in this discussion, that party which is deliberately perpetrating a lie, and is abandoning the true god, and is making a god of a powerless human being, he, according to the days of the debate, (that is one month per day, thus by fifteen months), he will be thrown into hell, and he will suffer extreme disgrace, if he does not turn to the truth.⁹⁹

The prophetic death sentence against his main opponent unless he withdrew his claim would become a familiar tactic in Ahmad's armoury. The proclamation created a storm in the Punjab and for the next fifteen months generated a tract war.¹⁰⁰ For the Christians, this period of time was one of trepidation and possible loss of face. Their missionary's survival was made an occasion of public celebration, but it was to be the death knell for the *mubahasa*.

The early followers of Ahmad focused far more on his claim to prophetic utterances based on revelation. For example, in the criminal case brought by Dr Clark, the trial was perceived as evidence of prophesy fulfilled. Sher Ali, for example, would declare that 'God informed Ahmad not only of the impending case but also of its result before Dr Clark conceived of the idea of instituting criminal proceedings against him'.¹⁰¹ He described the actual moment of prophecy:

Ahmad told us that he had seen lightning coming to his house from the West, and when it approached his house it was changed into a star. Then he received the Word of God saying 'This is nothing but a threat from the authorities and the result will be discharge'.¹⁰²

Ahmad's conviction that the door to prophetic revelation remained open within Islam placed him at odds with normative Islam, but remained a powerful part of his perceived mission.¹⁰³

Prophecy was to feature in the most controversial incidents between Ahmad and two Christian preachers, but in these cases the leaders of the Christian sects selected as objects of Ahmad's wrath resided in the West and were not operating as missionaries in India. The typical elements used by Ahmad against his opponents were still displayed. Each case was transformed into a personal contest in which the victor would champion the truth of his respective religion. In each case, prophecy was the chosen weapon to ensure victory. This time, Ahmad's attention would be drawn to rival claimants to prophecy and messiahship rather than attempts to convert Indians to Christianity. It may be that Ahmad's determination not to let any critique of Islam go unanswered was expanding to include Britain and the United States. His first opportunity arose in the person of John Alexander Dowie (1847–1907). Dowie was a well-known, if controversial, Christian preacher with a reputation for faith healing. In 1868 he studied theology at Edinburgh University, and in 1872 returned to South Australia, where he was ordained as a pastor in the Congregational Church. Around 1879 he became an independent evangelist, and he attracted a number of followers in Melbourne in the early 1880s. He moved to the United States in 1888 after an arson scandal. His first church there was the International Divine Healing Association in San Francisco, but after another scandal he moved to Chicago in 1890. After gaining some success as a healer, he established the Christian Catholic Church in 1893, renamed the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in 1903. After he established several tabernacles and healing centres, his following was numbered at around 6,000. In 1900 he founded the city of Zion in Illinois, where he was joined by followers from around the world. The city was run as

a theocratic community under Dowie's leadership until it collapsed following financial irregularities and the founder's increasing ill health. In 1905 in Mexico, he suffered a stroke and was deposed by his chief lieutenant. Dowie attempted to recover his authority through litigation, but he died in 1907.¹⁰⁴

Ahmad appeared to have two issues with Dowie. In 1899, Dowie claimed to be 'God's messenger' and the return of the Jewish prophet Elijah. He began to call himself 'Elijah the Restorer', 'the Prophet Elijah' and 'the Third Elijah'.¹⁰⁵ As a restorationist who believed in the imminent end times and the need for Christians to recover the same conditions that prevailed over the early church, he considered that he carried the necessary spiritual gifts and apostolic authority to restore Christianity.¹⁰⁶ A claim to prophethood or to be the forerunner of Christ's second coming may not necessarily have attracted Ahmad's attention, but Dowie was a vocal opponent of Islam. He not only believed that Christ would destroy Islam on his return, but warned that Islam's strength needed to be heeded by Christians in the United States and Europe. He regarded Muhammad as promoting a 'falsehood' and stated that it was one he regarded 'with great contempt'.¹⁰⁷ Dowie's opposition to Islam, his attack on the Prophet and his claim that Islam would be destroyed by the imminent return of Christ were in direct opposition to Ahmad. Ahmad challenged Dowie to a 'prayer duel', declaring, 'Mr Dowie need not repeatedly announce his prophecy of the destruction of all Muslims, but should keep me alone in his mind and should pray that, of the two of us, the one who is false may die before the other'.¹⁰⁸ The challenge attracted some media attention in the United States, although it is difficult to ascertain whether the articles that were published took the matter seriously or were ironic in tone.¹⁰⁹

John Alexander Dowie, although ten years younger than Ahmad, died penniless on 9 March 1907, deserted by his wife and children and usurped in the leadership of his religious movement.¹¹⁰ Ahmad outlived him by fourteen months. The incident is given considerable prominence by the Ahmadiyya movement as a sign of Ahmad's divinely bestowed position, but its real significance is the conscious effort to take the battle lines outside India and into the West itself. Dowie may have been a flawed character, but his version of Christianity was a forerunner of modern Pentecostalism, and some of his followers were to become influential figures in early twentieth-century Protestant revivals.¹¹¹ Ahmad was to depict Dowie as an enemy of Christians as well as a vociferous opponent of the Prophet. He writes of the incident:

His magic has subdued and bewitched a great many Christians. And he claimed prophethood and called himself an apostle confessing at the same time that the

son of Mary was a God. And he reviled and abused our Prophet the generous ... And he used to say that he would put to death each and every Muslim in a very short time and leave none of the believers in unity.¹¹²

Ahmad states that Allah had permitted such calumnies against Islam and false claims of prophethood awaiting the time that he was chosen to defeat Dowie. 'But Allah granted him a respite till I called him for a *Mubahila* prayer duel. And I prayed against him before the Lord of Honour. And I smelt in him a Satan.'¹¹³ Ahmad explains the nature of the *mubahala* as follows:

And verily I call thee to the religion of Islam and truth and penitence towards Allah, the Honourable and the Powerful. And if thou turnest away and do not accept the call to truth, let us have a *Mubahila* [sic] and pray to Allah that His curse may come down upon him who has left the truth and claimed the prophethood and apostleship in a deceitful manner.¹¹⁴

The conditions of the *mubahala* are laid out as,

And I said to this false prophet that if he would not accept this challenge and neither withdraw his claim to prophethood he would not be saved by any such stratagem, but Allah would destroy him with a very heavy punishment ... And he waited for my death and I waited for his. And I trusted in God the Helper of Truth and the Protector of Islam.¹¹⁵

Ahmad was not prepared to accept a rival claim to prophethood coming from a Christian claimant. He writes:

And surely, our Prophet is the seal of the prophets and the last of all the apostles. So no one can legitimately set his claim of prophethood, in an independent manner, after our Prophet the Chosen. And nothing is left after him but frequent conversation with Allah and this too is subject to the condition that one be a follower of our Holy Prophet.¹¹⁶

The second incident also made use of a *mubahala* to call to account another claimant to divine favour. This time the challenge was issued to a British religious figure of some notoriety. In 1846 an Anglican priest, Henry James Prince, had started a movement known as the Agapemonites or Community of the Son of Man.¹¹⁷ Prince believed that he was an embodiment of the Holy Spirit and began to gather increasing numbers of ardent followers. He was defrocked by the Anglican Church as a result of his beliefs, but more particularly his sexual relationships with female followers. He would establish bases in Upper Clapton, London, Spaxton, Somerset and, more briefly, Stoke-by-Clare in Suffolk, Brighton and Weymouth. Although the numbers were small, the group was committed to

a belief that the end time was imminent and that Jesus Christ was due to return within their own lifetime.¹¹⁸ After Prince's death in 1899, the movement was resurrected by John Hugh Smyth-Pigott (1852–1927). Smyth-Pigott cemented his legitimacy to lead the movement based on his belief that he was the second coming expected by Prince's followers. In September 1902 he announced that he was the messiah while preaching at the Clapton Church known as the 'The Ark of the Covenant'.¹¹⁹ Although Joshua Schwieso maintains that Agapemone had arrived in India by 1902, it is not possible to ascertain whether Ahmad or his followers were aware of the movement in the Punjab.¹²⁰ Ahmadiyya accounts suggest that Ahmad had been informed by a follower, possibly Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, that Pigott claimed to be Jesus Christ.¹²¹ In November 1902, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote to Pigott, informing him of the consequences of making false claims to prophethood and challenging him. He wrote, 'You are false in making this claim. If you have the power, come and compete with me'.¹²² In *Tadhkirah*, the collection of Ahmad's prophecies, dreams and visions, he explains that when praying over Pigott's claims, he received a prophetic revelation that 'Allah is severe in retribution. They are not acting righteously'.¹²³ The revelation was explained in the same source as meaning that 'his end will be doomed and he will be afflicted with God's chastisement' unless called to repentance.¹²⁴ In a letter to Smyth-Pigott, also sent to Western newspapers and entitled 'a warning to a pretender to divinity', interestingly headed as 'intended for circulation in Europe and America',¹²⁵ Ahmad states, 'I therefore warn him through this notice that if does not repent of this irreverent claim he shall soon be annihilated even in my lifetime with sore torment proceeding from God and not from the hands of man'.¹²⁶ As in the previous example, Ahmad declares that 'the death of Mr Pigott within my lifetime shall be another sign of my truth'.¹²⁷ He confidently predicts that the prophecy will be brought to fruition by the 'efficacy of my prayer'.¹²⁸ Ahmad continues, 'We are both under the control of a higher power, and that powerful God shall bring the false messiah to destruction within the lifetime of the true one'.¹²⁹

It is not known if Smyth-Piggot received the warning from Ahmad, but the last two examples show that Ahmad was prepared to place his reputation as Allah's latest emissary on the line. Although the two Christian movements were outside the mainstream, Ahmad was prepared to challenge Christian aberrations from Islamic paradigms even outside of India, taking his defence of Islam further afield and providing a wider audience for his message.

Ahmad's responses to the British Raj and the presence of Christian missionaries in India need to take account of the various strategies or lack of strategies by Muslim intellectuals or religious movements to the aggressive preaching of

the Christians and their aggressive reactions to Islam in India. In this respect it is more useful to overlook Ahmad's claims for himself and examine his methods in the light of his less controversial role as an Indian renewer or reformer of Islam.

As we have seen, there were many reformers of Islam in Muslim India, but arguably Ahmad was the only one who took up the mantle of not only defending the religion but also taking its message to the Western world. He differed considerably from the modernists led by Sayyid Ahmad Khan, despite his family's sympathies for the position that Sir Sayyid had taken up as pro-British after the 1857 uprising. Ahmad may have had common ground on the point of maintaining loyalty to the British politically, but he was not a modernist when it came to reforming Islam. The Deobandis were also prominent at the same time, and whatever sympathy Ahmad may have had for their strategy to protect Islam from the British and the Hindus after the loss of Mughal power through fatwa campaigns and Islamic educational institutions (*dar al-ulum*), he was not inclined towards isolationism as a method of protecting the Indian *umma*. Ahmad wanted to engage with the West and felt positive towards British rule in India, and above all, he was intent on bringing Islam to the West.

Arguably, 1857 is the key to understanding the various reactions by individual Muslim reformers and reform movements. The loss of power in India by the Mughals deeply disturbed Indian Muslims' perceptions of their place in the cosmological struggle between good and evil, and their special status as the final and renewed Abrahamic monotheism. The 1857 uprising against the British was the last opportunity for *jihad* understood as an armed struggle against a non-Muslim power in a land perceived as *dar al-Islam*. From 1857 to the creation of Pakistan in 1947, *jihad* would need to be interpreted differently. The Deobandis focused their struggle on maintaining their view of a pristine Islam, communicated to the Muslim masses to ensure protection against the majority Hindu populations, the new British rulers and false practices and doctrines among India's Muslims. Ahmad completely renewed the understanding of classical *jihad* as meaning warfare. According to Powell, he 'had come in peace to preach a "spiritual" jihad not a "physical" jihad or struggle against non-believers'.¹³⁰ This understanding of his mission led to a very antagonistic relationship with local Christian missionaries and the promotion of the term 'holy war' by both sides, but it did not result in an anti-British posture. On the contrary, Ahmad understood that British rule guaranteed the freedoms necessary to preach his message of a 'true' Islam. Powell notes that Ahmad's position on the legitimacy of armed struggle was not much different from that of other members of the Indian *ulama*, who had decided that *jihad* could not be undertaken against

a non-Muslim power that defended the right to practise one's religion freely. Instead, the *jihad* of the tongue and the pen was pursued aggressively even if actual physical violence was forbidden.¹³¹

Inspired by the idea of a spiritual *jihad*, and perhaps motivated by the success of the Christian missionaries in India, Ahmad decided to take his message of Islam to the West and create an Islamic missionary endeavour. In that respect, his response must be understood as a purely religious endeavour, an attempt to restore Islam to its divinely appointed pre-eminence in the world, to finally destroy Christianity in its heartland and fulfil the Muslim end-time belief that prophesied 'the destruction of the Cross'.¹³² Ahmad's conviction was that Islam remained a living faith, that is, as the final revelation it continued to be the recipient of prophecy, miracles and divine guidance. Christianity had been supplanted by the Arabian revelation and was therefore 'dead'. It would be a prophetic renewal led from India that would restore Muhammad's revealed truth to the world.

His position can be best summarized in what he wrote to publicize his first major written work, *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*, completed in 1881. He openly declares his mission as the 'Reformer of my time', but it is in the prayer at the end that we see his dual attitude towards the British. They are first praised for their benevolent rule, but then he prays that God will guide them to Islam. Although he asks that all nations be blessed to accept Islam, he pleads:

Especially the English nation who have not as yet availed themselves of the sunshine of truth, and whose civilized, prudent and merciful empire has, by obliging us by numerous acts of kindness and friendly treatment, exceedingly encouraged us to try our utmost for their welfare, so that their fair faces may shine with heavenly effulgence in the next ... Oh God! Guide them and help them with Thy Grace, and instil in their minds the love for Thy religion, and attract them with Thy power, so that they may have faith on Thy Book and Prophet, and embrace Thy religion in groups.¹³³

This chapter has examined a number of incidents to highlight Ahmad's understanding of 'holy war' and his attitudes towards the British. Although such incidents may appear to be parochial, an engagement with a group of Indian convert missionaries in Amritsar and elsewhere in the Punjab and a prophecy war with two eccentric Christian sects in Britain and the United States, the Ahmadi message soon demonstrated its capacity to be taken seriously. Between 1891 and 1901, membership increased from 80 to 3,000. A decade later, in 1911, it was estimated at 19,000.¹³⁴ By the 1940s, numbers were estimated to be closer to a

half million, and a very successful Indian Muslim missionary movement had reached out to Britain, Western Europe, North America, Africa and Indonesia.

These initial and somewhat provocative contacts with the British missionaries in India and the challenges issued to self-proclaimed messiahs would not appear on the surface to be a successful means of promoting Ahmad globally. However, Ahmad was a visionary able to learn from the Christian missionaries who had brought to India a ‘new social apparatus of the “mission”’.¹³⁵ Nile Green points out that the missionaries had introduced a ‘fierce new polemic’ through an ‘investment in vernacular printing and organizational innovations that ranged from subscriber revenues to proletarian outreach’.¹³⁶ Although Green acknowledges that the situation in northern India was different to that in Bombay,¹³⁷ he argues that the transformations in the religious market were ‘oceanic in scope’ and would transform the missionary endeavours of all Indian religions, not only Islam.¹³⁸ Ahmad would take quick advantage of the advent of cheap print introduced by the missionaries and would use the technology of paper to announce his message of a new revelation to the world.¹³⁹ Printing machines were being mass produced in India from around 1850.¹⁴⁰ Printed declarations of loyalty or pledges of allegiance (*bai'at*) would be used for the first time in India by the Ahmadiyya, but above all, Ahmad would find ways to send his treatises and challenges across continents and oceans.¹⁴¹ Gelvin and Green point out that ‘the Muslim print revolution enabled new religious movements to disseminate their messages and compete with more established groups’.¹⁴²

The publicity in India generated by advertisements, challenges and controversies would be picked up in British and American newspapers. The Pigott and Dowie affairs would be reported directly. These were enough to attract the eagle eyes of British and American seekers of truth with an interest in the Orient and dissatisfied with the current state of Christianity. They were few in number but sufficient to assist the movement when it sent its missionaries to Britain just before the advent of World War I. This chapter has explored the early attempts by Ahmad to reach out to the British; in the following chapter, the already existing attempts to establish Islam in Britain will be explored, with an emphasis on those that were a ‘fit’ with Ahmad’s wish that the British would embrace Islam ‘in groups’.

Muslim Mobilization in Britain

The Ahmadiyya contact with Britain and the arrival of their missionaries from 1912 would not happen in a vacuum. Efforts had already been made to establish Islam in the nation, and the fruits of these efforts provided the resources to work with the missionaries and develop a mission. These are explored in this chapter. There had been contact between Britain and the Muslim world since the time of the Umayyad Empire,¹ but by the end of the nineteenth century, the acquisition of India would impact the population of Muslims in Britain. Gelvin and Green point out that the advent of steamships between Bombay and British ports had helped to form ‘self-consciously’ Muslim communities in London that were multi-ethnic.² The increase in numbers would lead to efforts to mobilize this Muslim presence under the uniting umbrella of Islam and, according to Gelvin and Green, would create an environment in which European languages, especially English, would become part of the ‘linguistic currency of Islam’.³

The arrival of the twentieth century would see the main contact with Muslims and avenues for conversion to Islam shift from the Ottoman world to India.⁴ The first organized effort by Indian Muslims to establish Islam in Britain would come with the arrival of Ahmadiyya missionaries early in the second decade of the twentieth century. The Ahmadiyya would focus their community-building in Woking and London, but this would occur between two other attempts to organize Muslims in Britain by drawing upon the resources of religion. The first was achieved by Abdullah Quilliam, who had brought together a unique group of British Muslim converts, Yemeni and Somali sailors (lascars), South Asian travelers and Indian students, loosely networked by his lecture tours and the Islamic centre and mosque that he established in Liverpool between 1888 and 1908.⁵ The second attempt was that of the Yemeni-born Al-Hakimi, who organized the families of lascars politically and religiously in British seaports, such as Cardiff and North Shields, in the 1930s.⁶ The memory of Quilliam’s activities in

Liverpool and elsewhere in Britain remained when the Ahmadiyya-led Woking and London initiatives developed, and some of the prominent converts would be significant in assisting the Indian missionaries, including Quilliam himself until his death in 1932.⁷

New converts in London would be predominantly middle- and upper-class men and women seeking an alternative religious and spiritual journey to that of Christianity, and in this respect they differed from Quilliam's community-building in Liverpool, where many of the converts were drawn from the city's working classes.⁸ Another key difference was that Quilliam's community in Liverpool had Indian connections, but the dominant inspiration for the Islam that was practised was in the Ottoman world. Quilliam would convert in Morocco and seek his spiritual direction from Constantinople. The first community of British Muslims to be heavily influenced by Islam in India would be the Woking and London converts inspired by the Ahmadiyya missionaries. Quilliam and the earlier converts may not have been primarily influenced by Britain's excursions into the East and the communications facilitated by Empire, even though some of them had first connected to Islam when in service in India, and Quilliam was certainly drawn into the politics of Empire as his work in Liverpool developed.⁹ The Ahmadiyya missionaries would be the first to arrive from a colonized nation with a conscious mission to proselytize in the West.¹⁰

The early beginnings of European colonial expansion brought the first evidence of South Asians entering Britain.¹¹ In the sixteenth century, the British were coming into contact with the growing power of the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean, and it was this contact that brought substantial numbers of Muslims to Britain. Sophie Gilliat-Ray recounts how the first Muslims to be recorded as landing on Britain's shores were Turkish and North African slaves rescued from Spanish ships by English pirates during the reign of Elizabeth I.¹² By the end of the eighteenth century, Turkey and Britain had cemented close commercial, political and military relationships, and this cooperation brought about a range of visits by Ottoman subjects.¹³ Ottoman sailors and traders would visit British ports more often and for longer periods during the nineteenth century, with some taking up permanent residence.¹⁴ From the nineteenth century, Britain had formed a number of diverse connections with parts of the Muslim world and gradually, as industrial expansion created the demand for labour, a pattern of migration involving Muslims took shape. Nabil Matar estimates that the number of Muslims in Britain at the middle of the seventeenth century to be around several hundred.¹⁵ This would have included Indian servants and *ayahs* (nannies) who had been brought back by British employees of the East India

Company and sailors in the employ of the company (some would have been Muslim).¹⁶ By the end of the Victorian era, Britain hosted diplomats, merchants and students from the Ottoman Empire and India; sailors from the Yemen, Somalia and India in the seaports of Cardiff, Liverpool and Tyneside; and a well-established colony of textile merchants in Manchester from the Levant who had been in the town since the 1820s.¹⁷ Although these individuals sometimes married native Britons in the dock areas, it appears that none of these various communities of Muslims had considered it their role to promote Islam to the British.

By the end of nineteenth century, as the impact of the altered relationship between Britain and India was felt, more Indians were to find themselves in Britain, many of them students at British universities, and some were to create Islamic societies.¹⁸ The main populations of Muslims were lascars increasingly employed by the British merchant fleet below decks, some sons of the wealthy sent to Britain's public schools and universities, diplomats, visiting dignitaries, wealthy travelers, traders and exotic entertainers.¹⁹ The colonization of India would bring with it a reverse wanderlust, slow at first, but building as more Indians sought the economic possibilities of travel to the heart of the British Empire or were driven by adventure and curiosity. Travellers from India had begun to make their way by the end of the eighteenth century, but until the advent of steamships, the numbers of Indians remained relatively small.²⁰ The most numerous group would have been students whose upper-class parents saw the opportunities of participating in the colonial enterprise, sent to study law at the Inns of Court or to master the English language at the most reputable of English and Scottish universities.²¹ Rozina Visram informs us that in addition to these young men of wealthy families, there were merchants and Islamic clerics.²²

However, the main source of Muslim settlement remained the Middle East and Africa. Moroccan and Levantine merchants were attracted to the opportunities offered by Manchester's new position as the textile manufacturing capital of the world.²³ The Anglo-Ottoman Commercial Treaty, signed at Balta Liman in 1838, eased trade between the Ottoman world and the Far East, and the opening of the Suez Canal at the end of the 1860s created opportunities for further expansion.²⁴ The Arabs took advantage and established trading houses in Manchester to export cotton goods back to their places of origin. Visram calculates that by the end of the century, the number of Middle Eastern merchant houses had grown to 150, including Moroccans from Fez and others from Syria, Lebanon and Turkey.²⁵ The increase in Ottoman citizens led to a greater

Ottoman representation, mainly Turkish diplomats in Manchester, Liverpool and London.

The opening of the Suez Canal and the increased opportunities of trade with India, the Ottomans and the Far East brought new opportunities for the lascars.²⁶ Their number grew exponentially, from 470 in 1804 to 1336 in 1813. Some 3,000 arrived in 1842 and, according to one estimate, 10,000 to 12,000 in 1855.²⁷ The majority were Muslim. Salter calculated that 3,271 Lascars arrived from 40 ships in 1873, of which 1,653 were Muslims from India, Egypt, Malaya and Turkey. Of the 7,814 Lascars surveyed in 1874, 4,685 came from India and 1,440 were Arabs, 225 were Turks and 85 were Malays.²⁸ Thus the peasants of the Yemen became sailors, creating colonies in the main ports of the world, including the port cities of Britain, as they awaited ships or established dockside industries, for example, boarding houses and food outlets for their fellow countrymen. The advent of coal-burning steamships, especially the lines from the East passing through the Suez, brought into prominence the ports of Cardiff, Liverpool, Hull and South Shields, and it was these ports where settled communities developed.²⁹

These increasing visits and subsequent settlements in Britain would lead to some conversion to Islam through marriage. As the dominant gender of the Muslim travelers was male, the majority of converts would be female. The flow of knowledge was generally perceived to be from advancement or progress that could be gleaned from the European nations. Sophie Gilliat-Ray notes that Muslim travelers to Britain, such as Mirza Itisam ul-Din, a Mughal diplomat who toured extensively in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century, Mirza Abu Taleb Khan, a Muslim scholar who toured Europe between 1799 and 1803, and Shaykh Din Muhammad, who attempted various business enterprises in the same period, were more inclined to learn from their explorations of Britain than to introduce Islamic knowledge to the country.³⁰ However colonial incursions, along with trade possibilities, increased with the Muslim world, Ray states that opportunities for Arabic- or Urdu-speaking scholars able to act as cultural bridges also developed.³¹ These scholars, known as *munshis* (teachers), were often competent in Islam and able to function as imams in some of the early attempts to create Muslim communities in British cities.

In addition to conversion through marriage, it was not until the activities of Abdullah Quilliam and the Ahmadiyya missionaries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that Islam was openly proselytized as an option for British men and women. Occasionally upper-middle-class Britons would convert as a consequence of travel to the Middle or Far East, but such conversion was often perceived as an ethnic choice that rendered the individual suspect of

renouncing his or her own culture and heritage, even to the point of betrayal.³² It was not until the mid-nineteenth century, with its rapidly improving transport facilities and the expansion of British trade and colonial enterprise, especially with India, when opportunities and possibilities for conversion arose as contact with Muslims increased. The change in the power balance between the Muslim world and European empires was more likely to create a concern among Muslims for the future of Islam and turn the gaze inward on reform, and only slowly would a few Muslims see the possibility of reverse mission and the chance to promote Islam in the West.

In spite of the relative proximity of North Africa and the Muslim Balkans, it was India that would provide the first attempts at reverse mission. In 1910, the Chishti Sufi, Hazrat Inayat Khan (1882–1927), departed India for London accompanied by his two brothers. Hazrat Inayat Khan's eclectic spirituality, drawn from the Sufis but also from the ancient wisdom of India, would attract a number of middle-class seekers, mostly women, from the same circles that were influenced by the theosophy of Madame Blavatsky and Annie Besant. It is unlikely that these seekers would have considered that they had become Muslims, or formally converted to Islam. Hazrat Inayat Khan would arrive in the period when considerable interest in the esoteric, especially Oriental wisdom, was becoming of interest to intellectual and artistic elites. Theosophy had placed Indian religious wisdom on the radar of seekers, but eclecticism was more likely than conversion to Buddhism, Hinduism or Islam. Arguably, the new interest in all things Oriental would open the door to others who were working with considerable diligence to bring British converts to Islam.

Liverpool was becoming the busiest port in the British Empire and hosted a small but growing Yemeni presence. Salter's *Sketches of Sixteen Years among Orientals*, published in 1868, records visits to Liverpool and speaks of Arab sailors on the trading vessels and warships of the Ottoman navy. He visited the graves of thirty Ottoman sailors buried in a Liverpool cemetery, probably in Fazakerley, and according to the 1881 census, there were eight Egyptians and forty-four Turks living in Merseyside.³³

In addition to the small Oriental Muslim presence, a Liverpool solicitor converted to Islam in 1887 after visiting North Africa. William Henry Quilliam adopted the name Abdullah and began to seek converts to his new faith, first in his native city of Liverpool and later throughout Britain.³⁴ His conversion was announced in the Liverpool press and would have caused some consternation among the city's gentry, as Quilliam was highly respected in the city. His family members were prominent Methodists and established watchmakers there.

He had taken up law as his profession, and in 1878 was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of Judicature. In addition to his law firm, Quilliam was also well known for his temperance activities, for being president of the Mersey Railway Quay and Carters Union and as an amateur geologist.³⁵ Quilliam would establish the first institutional presence of Muslims in Britain organized around religion. Drawing together new Liverpudlian converts and a handful of already existing converts, Ottoman businessmen and diplomats, Muslim students and the Ottoman sailors, Quilliam founded the Liverpool Muslim Institute (LMI) to promote Islam in Britain. In 1893 he established Britain's first registered mosque and became renowned across the Muslim world through his weekly newspaper, *The Crescent*, which was circulated to more than eighty Muslim nations.

By the same year, he had attracted the attention of the sultan of the Ottomans, Ahmed Hamid II, the titular caliph of the Sunni Muslim world, and the amir of Afghanistan. The former was to award Abdullah Quilliam the title of Shaikh al-Islam of the British Isles, and the latter donated £2,300 for the purchase of the mosque's premises, which also included boys' and girls' day schools, facilities for evening classes, a Literary Society, an Oriental Library and Museum, a boarding house for visiting Muslims, an orphanage and printing works. It is estimated that by 1908, when he left Liverpool to reside in Constantinople, Quilliam had converted more than 250 native-born English men and women to Islam. Perhaps more significantly, he had attracted to Islam or inspired a number of prominent personalities who were to play key roles in establishing the London and Woking Muslim communities in the early decades of the twentieth century.

The Muslim community in Liverpool was more than a group of English middle-class converts. The renown of the British lawyer and his mosque in Liverpool had gone out to the Muslim world. At the time, Liverpool was the second city of the empire and the gateway through which most Muslims arrived in the country. The new railway linked the city to Manchester and the rest of the nation. Wealthy upper-class Muslims had already developed their own version of a world tour and arrived in Liverpool on steamships. They would use the city as a place of transit to visit London, Europe and even the United States. Many had heard of the mosque in the city and visited it, often staying as a guest in Quilliam's villa, from where they would attend *jum'a* prayers on Friday, sometimes even giving lectures on various aspects of Islam or Muslim culture and history.

The steamships, as noted, brought not only the wealthy to the shores of England. The Muslim sailors, especially those employed below decks, were often in dire straits, stranded in Britain's ports as they waited to contract a journey

home. Abdullah Quilliam became their champion, providing accommodations when they were homeless, attending them in hospital when they were ill or offering a full Muslim funeral with appropriate rites when their cause was hopeless.³⁶ Quilliam was also known to Muslim students studying in Edinburgh, Oxford and Cambridge. They visited him, and he helped Muslim Cambridge students to establish the first student Islamic Society in Britain.³⁷

Through his activities, Quilliam was able to bring together the various constituents of the nineteenth-century Muslim presence in Britain and draw upon the resources of a mosque and Islamic centre in Liverpool to create a hub around which these often itinerant Muslim communities could cohere. But he also effectively utilized the possibilities offered by the global reach brought about by the Victorian communication revolution to network and assist fledgling Muslim communities trying to establish themselves in Canada, the United States, Australia and South Africa. Yet globalization was about more than using steamships, trains, telegraph and wireless to lessen the impact of the geographical distances between nations, or even the increasing occurrence of migration to lessen the gulf between cultures. Quilliam would discover to his cost that globalization was also about Empire and impacted the politics of Muslims in Britain with regard to foreign policy and incursions into the Muslim world.

Many of the 200-plus converts to Islam from Liverpool, Birkenhead and other places in north-west England were practising Christians who, for various reasons, had become disillusioned. Their conversion narratives indicate the religious doubt that was growing in some quarters in the Victorian era, complicated by the local features in Liverpool, where sectarian strife was rampant. Nationally, there had been a slow growth of unbelief in the 1850s and 1860s, spreading more widely in the 1870s. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, agnosticism became one of the available religious options. Many people were beginning to feel that the Christian faith rested on a less secure foundation than it had fifty years earlier.³⁸

Scientific discoveries called into question the accuracy of some biblical passages, notably the creation accounts in Genesis. In the 1830s and 1840s, geologists began to assert that the earth must be much older than the writers of Genesis had realized. Fundamental questions had been raised by Darwin. More often than not, knowledge derived from science would call into question biblical truths. Critical studies of the New Testament pioneered in England during the eighteenth century and developed by German scholars called into question the biblical accounts of the life and teaching of Jesus and asked probing questions concerning the authors' polemical purposes.³⁹ The accounts of miracles in the

Gospels were under intense scrutiny.⁴⁰ The idea that science had superseded religion, or had made it much harder to believe in any kind of religion, was winning wider acceptance among the educated middle classes.⁴¹

There were also doubts related to the morality of Christian doctrines. The everlasting punishment of the wicked, strongly re-emphasized by preachers of the evangelical revival taking place at the time,⁴² and the central doctrine of the Atonement were under scrutiny. The idea of one person standing in for all others seemed offensive to the moral sensibilities of many mid-Victorian English people. Nor did the idea that the whole human race had inherited a burden of sin from the first man and woman make sense anymore. Once these doctrines were weakened, other religions could be evaluated on moral criteria and the degree to which their teachings seemed more reasonable.⁴³

Added to this general malaise, the Muslim converts of Liverpool were also dismayed by the level of sectarianism and the feeling of animosity that allegiance to Christian denominations could bring. Quilliam was also distressed at the level of immorality he saw on the expanding docks of Merseyside and the inability of many Christian leaders to condemn the role of alcohol in compounding the ills of poverty. For the converts, Islam appeared to offer a solution to these challenges without having to sacrifice Abrahamic monotheism. The apparent equality within Islam would also appear attractive in class-divided Victorian society, where even church pews could be differentiated. Islam was able to challenge the doctrines of the Atonement and the Trinity, but on the other hand, there was a massive image of backwardness and even enmity to Britain's interests to overcome. Conversion to Islam could raise issues of loyalty and citizenship. Individuals who followed religions whose centres of authority were abroad were often looked upon with deep suspicion by the British public, and this was particularly true when the foreign nations that were associated with the religions were hostile or at war with Britain.

Quilliam never shied away from being forthright in his criticism of imperial policies towards the Muslim world. His challenge was to offset the prevalent view of Islam and present it as the religion of reason allied with the values of toleration and moderation that public opinion insisted were part of the British worldview. His political and social activism, pride of nation and love of its values, but refusal to confuse patriotism with subservience to government policy, showed a way forward for Muslims in Britain.⁴⁴ Quilliam's writings reveal him as the quintessential convert to Islam, engaged in a monumental effort to reposition it not as a decadent and warlike superstition of the 'native' but as the religion of an accomplished civilization whose history had influenced the

development of Europe and, above all, as the latest revelation and renewal of the Abrahamic religions.⁴⁵ To accomplish these two aims would require all the focus of a powerful intellect and the skills of a legally trained journalist. The Liverpool converts got behind their leader's efforts to position Islam as a religion of reason, not as anti-science or dependent upon an emotional appeal to miracles that illogically confront the laws of nature, and also to present Islamic civilization as not inimical to the West but rather a major contributor to European development in the fields of science, mathematics and astronomy. But perhaps the most important challenge was to convince the public that Islam was not a religion of the foreigner, but one with deep historic roots in both British and European thought. The converts had to convince a sceptical public that the religion had developed harmonious ways of multi-faith living that contrasted with Christianity's persecution of minorities (Jews, black Africans).⁴⁶ The issue of women's rights was also a challenge. It needed to be argued that Muslim women were not chattels of men, but had been given ancient and unalienable rights in the Qur'an and exemplified in the life of the Prophet.⁴⁷ Politically, Quilliam and other converts would campaign that the Ottoman Empire should be courted as an ally against Russian expansionism. More controversially, they had to offset the dominant media view that attempts by Balkan Christians to break away from the Ottoman Empire were legitimate rebellions against an unjust rule. Quilliam would argue that the millet system enjoyed by the Ottomans permitted an enlightened self-autonomy of all minorities.⁴⁸ These issues would remain problematic for the later Indian missionaries and their London converts, especially during World War I.

Quilliam was not an apologist for Islam, but took up a forthright position that argued the logic of polygamy and defended Islam's divorce laws, its objections to alcohol and even Shari'a law, including *hudud* (criminal law) punishments. If we judge him by the standards of modern interfaith dialogue, Quilliam was aggressive towards Christianity. It was the religion that he had become disillusioned with. His reasons for publicly announcing his shift from Christianity to Islam are clear in his writings and demonstrate the contemporary disenchantment that many others felt at the time. He would find himself a natural ally with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's forthright attacks on Christianity and its doctrines, and there is agreement with the views expressed in many of the articles that appeared in the early issues of *The Review of Religions*.⁴⁹ The parallels between Muslim convert writings on Islam and the style and content of *The Review of Religions* were noted in April 1902 by the editor of *The Calcutta Review*, who argued that the articles were written by a European convert.⁵⁰

Quilliam's modus operandi was the Sunday lecture. The central activity of the mosque was worship, but conversion seemed to be linked to lecture content. The lectures were usually delivered by Quilliam, although if he was away, another prominent convert or one of his two elder sons would stand in. Sometimes visiting lecturers were invited whose religious convictions were of interest to Victorians, such as spiritualists, Mormons or Theosophists. Quilliam's lectures were usually scientific or cultural in their subject. He would speak on geology, history and comparative religion, or would deliver travelogues based on his journeys to exotic Oriental locations. Islam was usually introduced indirectly. The subtle method of introducing Islam, by appealing to the Victorian thirst for knowledge, was successful as a strategy of conversion. In a discussion with the Young Men's Literary Society at the mosque, Quilliam spoke about promoting Islam in the West and argued that there needed to be three emphases: first, the Unitarian doctrines of Islam; second, that Islam was a religion of reason compared with Christianity; and third, that there should be a focus on the ethical principles contained in the teachings of Muhammad.⁵¹

By 1906, Quilliam's efforts to promote Islam in Liverpool and beyond were established. The pattern was largely unchanged. The schools, the evening classes, the Medina Home and, to a lesser extent, the museum provided the thrust by which Quilliam counteracted the propaganda that stated that Islam was backward and not concerned with education or protecting the poor and vulnerable. Quilliam's public lectures on numerous topics provided a means to attract audiences that would not respond to invitations to discover more about Islam, and his many books and pamphlets provided a more direct introduction.⁵² Thus the Muslim sailors, merchants, entertainers, servants, students and even princes who visited Britain were treated to the experience of an English mosque with an English sheikh patronized by Muslim rulers. They were able to visit this mosque, which they did, and to take part in Islamic festivals and Friday communal worship, where they would line up with respectable Englishmen and their families from a wide spectrum of classes. At the same time, they would be reminded of the egalitarianism of Islam, its prioritizing of social justice and charity, the glorious history, the unique spirituality of its Prophet, the harmony between religion and science, the emphasis on human reason in the quest for truth and the injustice being perpetrated upon the Muslim world, which was so superior in morality and religious belief, by Christian aggression and greed for conquest. From time to time Quilliam would discuss polygamy, divorce and attitudes towards slavery and religious warfare from an Islamic point of view, and would argue that on each position Muslims were more humane and concerned with social

justice than Christian history indicated. However, it was Muslim fraternity that most particularly appealed to Quilliam, and he claimed that, while others such as Socialists and Christians spoke the language of universal brotherhood, only Muslims actually practised it.⁵³

Islam was preached as an enlightened religion that was the natural ally of knowledge and human progress, and he would often remind people that it was the Arabs who had maintained the torch of learning in the dark ages of European history. He would cite the examples of the translation of the works of Aristotle into Arabic, the geometry of Apollonius, Arab contributions to algebra and chemistry, and the adornment of the great Umayyad and Abbasid cities with libraries and colleges as well as mosques and palaces. In particular, he would point out that it had been Muslims in Spain who had supplied Europe with philosophy and medicine.⁵⁴

In 1908, Quilliam left for Constantinople with his eldest son. He did not return to his home city, and the community that he had created drifted into decline. He would return to Britain in 1912, to find that the focus of Islamic activity had shifted to London. The Woking mosque that had opened in 1889 through the efforts of Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner (1840–1899) had closed following Leitner's death. The mosque had been constructed with financial support from the Nizam of Hyderabad and Begum Shah Jehan, ruler of Bhopal State, with some additional donations given by Indian Muslims.⁵⁵ A house adjacent to the mosque was also built, with donations from Sir Salar Jang, then prime minister of Hyderabad State. Quilliam had never been a supporter of Leitner's mosque in Woking. His objections would appear to be based on the restrictions imposed by Leitner on the mosque's role in British Muslim life. An article by Djaffar Mortimore, one of Quilliam's co-workers in Liverpool, praises the mosque in Woking but decries the fact that, while many people in Britain wanted to see a real mosque, visitors to Woking were discouraged because the mosque was virtually unused.⁵⁶ The article states that British Muslims or Muslim travellers in Britain had to apply for a permit to pray in the mosque, and that no attempts were made to promote Islam from its premises. Djaffer went on to express his surprise that money from India was not invested in a mosque in either Liverpool or London to assist real work that was going on to bring the message of Islam to the British people.⁵⁷ Yet, in spite of reservations, throughout the 1890s the mosque in Woking functioned as a place of prayer for foreign Muslims living in London.⁵⁸

Quilliam had, however, worked with other Muslim individuals and organizations in London, some of them Indian in origin, while others were prominent

converts. Gilham notes that there were converts affiliated with Quilliam's British Muslim Association, founded in 1905, who were not residents of Liverpool. He confirms that the largest concentration would have been in London.⁵⁹ Others among the foreign Muslims were uneasy to work alongside Leitner and began to organize themselves in a temporary mosque near Regents Park associated with the Anjuman-i Islamia, later to become the Pan-Islamic Society. These latter ventures were supported by Quilliam. Congratulations were also sent to Khalid Sheldrake for establishing the Young England Islamic Society in London and becoming the official correspondent for *The Crescent* in the city.⁶⁰ In February 1906, Quilliam visited London and spoke with representatives of Islam there. He met with Abdullah al-Mamun Suhrawardy and Muhammad Kahia of the London Pan-Islamic Society, and with S. G. Bullen and Khalid Sheldrake representing the Young England Islamic Society.⁶¹ Quilliam also worked closely with Hajji Mahomed Dollie, a South African convert who became president of the Anjuman-i Islam in London sometime in 1893, and whose son Omar had attended Quilliam's school in Liverpool.⁶² Dollie was an orthodox Hanafi who was later the joint founder of a mosque in Cape Town.⁶³ Influenced by the methods of the LMI, Dollie would work towards an ideal of British Islam that combined orthodoxy, tradition and innovation. *The Crescent* reports Dollie saying, in his opening remarks dedicating his new prayer space in London, that he wanted proselytization done in a way that would make sense to the British, including possibly employing a prayer and hymn book in English and even pews in the mosque.⁶⁴

These contacts may give some indication of the groups that Quilliam considered like-minded and sympathetic towards him in the capital, and perhaps whose loyalties were also sympathetic to the Ottoman caliphate, but the various activities do provide some indication that Muslims in London were beginning to mobilize around Islam. Humayun Ansari categorizes Muslim efforts to mobilize in the capital as 'empire loyalists, pan-Islamic and faith networks'.⁶⁵ The first category included establishment figures, members of Indian Muslim professional and upper-class families residing in London, who were, in Ansari's words, 'incorrigibly "Anglophile"', and whose numbers included Ameer Ali (1849–1928), Abdullah Yusef Ali (1872–1953), Sir Abbas Ali Baig (d1933) and the Aga Khan.⁶⁶ These individuals would join with prominent converts during World War I to campaign on behalf of the Ottoman Caliphate in organizations such as the Anglo-Ottoman Society. We shall see that the highly pro-British position of the Ahmadiyya and the social background of their missionaries would also help them form alliances with these 'empire loyalists'.

The pan-Islamists, on the other hand, were organizing into political groups to campaign for the final break with the British Empire and the complete independence of Muslim nations. These more problematic opponents of the British would publish tracts and newspapers, lobby and campaign in London, mobilizing international opinion.⁶⁷ Their strong interest in Islamic issues would allow them to engage with Indian missionaries from Qadian, even though they were opposed to the missionaries' allegiance to the British. Students would be involved with both groups. Finally, Ansari mentions faith or religious networks. Even as early as 1886, Abdullah Suhrawardy had established the Anjuman-i-Islam to promote Islam in the capital. Khalid Sheldrake, who had converted to Islam in 1904 and was highly respected among Britain's Muslims, was associated with this movement.⁶⁸ Muslim students, prominent Indian Muslim individuals, both pan-Islamists and empire-loyalists, and converts such as Sheldrake, not to mention Quilliam himself, who reappeared in London as Henri de Léon circa 1912–1913, would form overlapping networks that would work with the missionaries at Woking and London to promote a united Islamic front that could function both defensively and offensively in London.

This chapter has provided an overview of the historic Muslim presence in Britain. It has focused extensively on Abdullah Quilliam's activities in Liverpool as the first attempt to establish Islam in Britain through the creation of a mosque and active conversion of British citizens. Quilliam's departure to Constantinople in 1908 effectively ended his mission in Liverpool, but London was ready to take over as the new active centre of missionary endeavour. Some of the middle-class male converts inspired to embrace Islam by Quilliam would be in London too, helping to form a nexus of converts who would join with others, such as Marmaduke Pickthall and Lord Headley, to form communities of Muslims that would continue the activities of the LMI, drawing upon very similar strategies. Although Quilliam had considerable contact with India and employed two Indian imams at his mosque in Liverpool, his main resources were Turkish. However, the tide was turning. As the Ottoman world collapsed, Britain's main contact with the Muslim world would increasingly come to be India. The following chapter will explore the Ahmadiyya attempts to initiate contacts with these early Western converts and begin gaining some converts of their own.

Ahmadiyya Relations with Early Western Converts

In Chapter 4, Ahmad's concern to reach out to the West, particularly Britain, and promote the British as a benign presence in India was noted. It was observed that one of the aims of the fledgling Ahmadiyya movement was to think out ways and means of promoting the welfare of new converts to Islam in Europe and America. The previous chapter demonstrated that Islam was beginning to become a religious option in Britain, both attracting converts and as a focus for foreign Muslim residents. By 1927, Sir Thomas Arnold was able to state that 'there are two separate Muhammadan missions now working in the country for the conversion of England to Islam'.¹ Arnold was referring to the two branches of the Ahmadiyya, by then operating in two separate centres, London and Woking. This chapter will explore the contacts that Ahmad made with existing converts in London and America, and how a handful of British men and women came to visit Qadian, some converting to Islam. Those early contacts reveal the desire of the Ahmadiyya to reach out to Westerners even before the arrival of their missionaries from 1912.

Ahmad had begun to refer prophetically to indications that his mission was being picked up and progressing in Europe and North America. An article in *The Review of Religions* recalls a vision he interpreted to mean that his writings (message) would go to London even though he would not be able to visit in person. In the article he claims that 'many righteous English people will accept the Truth'.² This vision occurred in the last decade of the nineteenth century.³ Ahmad describes the vision:

I saw in a vision that I was standing on a Minbar [pulpit] in the City of London demonstrating the truth and excellence of Islam in a most cogent form in the English language. After this I caught many birds which were sitting on small trees. The colour of the birds was white, and their size appeared to be the size of a partridge.⁴

Ahmad would interpret the words of the Hadith, 'the sun shall rise in the West', normally understood as a sign of the end time, as metaphorically referring to the rise of Islam in the Western world. In 1891, he linked the vision described above to the Hadith interpretation:

We believe in the rising of the sun from the West but it has been disclosed to me in a vision that the meaning of rising of the sun from the west is that the Western countries, which, from ancient times, have been enveloped in the darkness of disbelief and error, will be illumined by the sun of truth and will partake in Islam.⁵

Like other Indian religious reformers of the late nineteenth century, Ahmad believed in the spiritual supremacy of India, as opposed to the moral darkness and overemphasis on materialism in the West, but in his case it was Islam, not Indian spirituality, that would triumph. He bemoans the fact that no prophet has been given to the European people and believes that the time has come for this an apparent oversight to be corrected.

As a matter of fact the Western countries have had very little affinity with spiritual facts. It appears that God gave the whole of worldly wisdom to Europe and America and the whole of religious knowledge to Asia. The succession of Prophets from beginning to end fell to the lot of Asia and the spiritual accomplishments of the Saints [*vilayat*] were also given all of them to the people of Asia. Now God the Lord of the Worlds wants to bless the Western people in this respect.⁶

According to Dard, Ahmad had an interesting interpretation concerning Muhammad's statement that the 'door of repentance' would be closed when 'the sun rises from the West'.⁷ Ahmad would link this to the mass conversion of the Western world, arguing that 'when this sun will arise in its full glory upon the Western countries only those people will remain deprived of Islam upon whom the door of repentance is closed'.⁸

These interpretations of visions and existing Hadith point to Ahmad's conviction that the Western world would be at the forefront of the final victory of Islam. Around the same period, Ahmad would claim that a number of prophetic revelations had come to him directly in English. As early as 1883, five years before the founding of the Ahmadiyya movement, an English prophecy was given to Ahmad, stating, 'I love you. I will give you a large party of Islam'. These words were interpreted to mean that Islam was about to be spread in Europe and North America under Ahmad's guidance.⁹

In view of these prophesies and visions of an Islamic revolution that would transform the world, it is not surprising that any contact with British or American Muslims or any Westerner interested in Islam would be cultivated and literature would be produced, targeted to a Western readership. Ahmad's attention begins to turn to his own lack of knowledge of the English language, but he is aware that some of the more educated members among his companions are able to compensate for his deficiency. At the end of 1890s, he commented to Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, who would later become the first Ahmadiyya missionary in the United States, 'It was Allah the Almighty's wisdom that I did not learn English; He wanted that you partake in this blessing'.¹⁰ However, the instruction to learn English went further than identifying followers who could play a prominent role in the promotion of the Ahmadiyya and Islam to the West; it extended to all the members of the fledgling movement in the edict,

Where it is an obligation on every Muslim to read the Holy Quran does this mean that we should try to learn Arabic and not use this time in learning languages such as English? ... Thus it is imperative that in order to put before the leaders the purpose and reasoning of our doctrines we should study English so that you can be of benefit and help to the Government.¹¹ In this instruction, the need to learn English is also connected to the issue of loyalty to the British in India.

In 1899, Ahmad agreed to having his photograph taken for the purpose of propagation to the Western world. The art of face reading had become common in Europe, and it was believed possible to gain insight into the morals of the person in the photograph by observing his or her facial features. Ahmad commented that he was extremely averse to having someone take his photograph and made it clear that he was completely opposed to idol worship and 'portrait/picture worship'; however, he noted:

Nowadays the people of Europe first like to see the photograph of the individual who wrote the book they intend to read. The reason for this is that their insight is very deep and most of them bear the potential to merely observe a photograph and pass a judgment whether such a claimant is true or false.¹²

The desire to communicate with the Western world would take precedence over Ahmad's Hanafi conservatism towards images and shows his awareness of contemporary European customs. The photographs were published in *al-Hakm* on 10 August 1899 and in the English edition of *The Review of Religions* in October 1902, and attracted some comments from British and American readers.

Early in 1892, an Englishman named John White visited Ahmad briefly in Qadian and converted to Islam, but also took the oath of allegiance (*bai'at*),

effectively becoming the first British follower of the movement. Ahmad was to write to Al-Hajj Mawlana Hafiz Hakim Noor-ud-Din, who later became the first caliph of the movement, ‘Today he has entered Islam at my hand. He came to Qadian and entered the fold of silsilah [order] Ahmadiyyah. He has read Qur'an and Hadith in the English language.¹³ In the same letter he noted that John White had advised that there should be preachers from the movement in every nation of the world and that he would be prepared to pay the salary of a missionary in Madras. He quotes White as saying, ‘The sweet fragrance of the truth of Islam is in this path.¹⁴ John White was a district judge from Kurnool, a town in the Madras Presidency, today in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, a long journey by train to and from Qadian at the end of the nineteenth century. He came for only one day, because he had no annual leave. It can only be surmised that his interest in Islam was already strong and that he had read Indian newspaper articles about Ahmad. He belonged to that small but growing number among the British administration who were becoming interested in Islam, and even in some cases converting.¹⁵

In 1901, two new initiatives demonstrated that a mission to Europe was becoming uppermost in Ahmad's priorities. On 15 January 1901, Ahmad made the following announcement:

A matter that has always been a cause of distress and grief for me is that the academia of the country and seekers of truth in Europe are not deriving any benefit from the satisfying arguments and inspirational speeches which include all the hidden truths of piety, the strong proofs in favour of the religions of Islam ... [A] plan came about as a result of some sincere acquaintances who suggested to initiate a journal in the English language for the purpose of accomplishing the aforementioned tasks.¹⁶

In order to facilitate the process of publishing such a magazine, a new organization was initiated, known as Anjuman Isha'at-e-Islam (the central body for the propagation of Islam). Khwaja Kamal-ud-din, appointed as the first editor, along with Muhammad Ali announced the purpose of the organization at the Masjid Aqsa in Qadian on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha in 1901. The Anjuman's role was wider than administration of *The Review of Religions*. Kamal-ud-din stated its purpose thus: ‘an Anjuman [central administrative body] under the auspices of the Promised Messiah should be established whose primary task would be the dissemination of Islamic teachings in the English language.¹⁷

The Anjuman Isha'at-e-Islam held its inaugural ceremony on 2 March 1902, although the first issue of *The Review of Religions* had gone out two

months earlier. Initially, the *Review* was intended to publish Ahmad's lectures, but it soon extended its range to include some of the prominent followers and to reprint lectures or articles written by Western converts to Islam. The journal had three goals: to inspire and reinvigorate new Muslim converts in the West who may have felt isolated and thus provide a new impetus for converts to Islam to proselytize; to offer a clearer understanding of Islam to non-Muslim intellectuals; and to disconcert Christians who were anti-Islam and keen to promote their own theology of divinity and salvation.¹⁸ Ahmad directly linked the journal to his prophetic mission to remove 'all the misconceptions and misleading teachings of Christianity and to bring people from all over the world to the true religion'.¹⁹ He went on to declare: 'To achieve the above-mentioned purpose, also called "the breaking of the Cross" in the traditions of the Holy Prophet(sa), an English magazine, *the Review of Religions*, has been started'.²⁰

The Review of Religions would offer the most significant contact with British and North American converts prior to the arrival of the missionaries in London. Dard states that Western contact with Ahmad's writings began in 1908, but some prominent British and American converts were aware of Qadian earlier. Quilliam was aware of the journal and advertised it in his newspaper, *The Crescent*, from 1906.²¹ The contents reveal a number of themes of interest to Quilliam, including polygamy, marriage, divorce, slavery and concubinage. How Quilliam came to know of the Ahmadiyya community in Qadian is not known, although it is highly probable that *The Crescent* had found its way there, and both editors of the *Review* were highly competent in the English language and able to draw upon their contacts in Europe and the United States to find a network for distribution.

The articles that appeared in the early years of *The Review of Religions* were targeted to Western audiences, and a number of communications were made to the journal's editors expressing appreciation from both Muslim and non-Muslim sources. Ahmadiyya sources list a number of prominent non-Muslim endorsements, including from Tolstoy and Martijn Theodoor Houtsma,²² but there were also some from Western Muslim converts. Quilliam had reprinted an article from *The Review of Religions* in *The Crescent* as early as 1903 and praised the content:

Review of Religions is full of very interesting articles. A high-standard article has been included in this journal answering the allegations that the ignorant Christians assert against our Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. We have not come across an article of such high-standard before.²³

In 1905 Quilliam reiterated his appreciation: 'I am extremely happy when I read *Review of Religions* and consider it a priceless work in defence of this sacred religion'²⁴

Quilliam and his activities in Liverpool are also mentioned in contemporary Ahmadiyya sources. Although these are not usually until the period of the first Ahmadi Caliph, there is one mention of Quilliam during Ahmad's lifetime. Quilliam had written a letter to the editor of *The Review of Religions*, published in November 1905 under the title 'A letter by Quilliam to the *Review of Religions*, 1905, and advertisement of his magazines'. Quilliam introduces himself as the 'Sheikh-ul-Islam of the British Isles' and offers the editor a list of prominent British Muslims and other interested parties who would appreciate free copies of the journal. The editor of *The Review of Religions* notes Quilliam's financial losses in the pursuit of promoting Islam in Britain and comments, 'The cause of Islam in England should be the cause of every Muhammadan'.²⁵ The editor's supportive comments are followed by advertisements for Abdullah Quilliam's two periodicals, *The Crescent* and *Islamic World*. *The Review of Religions* also reprinted articles from *The Crescent*. As early as 1904, it reproduced Quilliam's account of the death of the Muslim convert Lord Stanley in 1903.²⁶

These early contacts between Abdullah Quilliam and Qadian do not tell us much, other than that Quilliam was either unaware of or unconcerned with Ahmad's claims to special prophetic status and that some in Qadian kept an eye on the activities of Muslim converts in the West. There is one conversation that makes it evident that Ahmad appreciated Quilliam's attempts to form a Muslim community in Liverpool. In a conversation with Muhammad Ali regarding a letter of desperation from Alexander Webb, the first American convert, Ahmad praises Quilliam's efforts in Liverpool, noting, 'In my opinion Abdullah Quilliam is far better than him [Webb] who has formed a Jama'at [community] of Muslims'.²⁷

The evidence would indicate that the Ahmadiyya in Qadian and Abdullah Quilliam were aware of each other during Ahmad's lifetime. The contacts are not prolonged or pronounced, but are instrumental in the sense that, as Islamic publishers and printers, both interested in active mission, they were on each other's mailing lists. There were other prominent British converts who corresponded with Qadian. Djaffar Mortimore from Birkenhead, who continued Quilliam's work in Liverpool after his departure to Constantinople in 1908, comments on receiving copies of *The Review of Religions*:

I must thank you very much indeed for your kindness in sending the copies of the *Review of Religions* which are most instructive and interesting, and I shall be glad to receive as suggested the copies as mentioned in your welcome letter.

I showed your letter to Sheikh Abdullah Quilliam and he suggested to me that I might catalogue them in the Islamic Library. I very much admire the simplicity of the arguments.²⁸

Nur-ud-Din Stephen, another prominent member of Abdullah Quilliam's Liverpool community, also received copies of the *Review* and wrote, 'I have to thank you for the numbers of Review you kindly sent me. I have read them with much pleasure and interest, and reserve them for a more careful reading as time permits'²⁹ Yahya-en-Nasir Parkinson, the prominent Scottish convert and British poet, also corresponded favourably with the editors of the Ahmadiyya journal, complimenting them:

I beg to acknowledge and thank you for the copies of the *Review of Religions* so kindly sent me ... I have been for the past year taking copies of the paper from Luzac & Co., and I am exceptionally well pleased with it; you are doing good work and I wish you every success.³⁰

The mention of Luzac as the distributor of *The Review of Religions* in Britain shows that the editors of the journal had been successful in penetrating mainstream publishing outlets in Britain and the United States. Luzac would later publish a translation of Ahmad's book *The Teachings of Islam* in 1910.³¹ Alexander Webb also expressed his appreciation of the new journal, affirming, 'I am certain that this journal will prove very influential in bringing about a change in the perception of religious thought. I am also certain that this very journal will prove to be a means of breaking the barriers from ignorance to the truth', and on another occasion stating, 'The articles of this journal are very full of wisdom and clarity in explaining the spiritual truths'.³²

The relationship between Alexander Webb and Ahmad was the first notable contact between a prominent Western convert to Islam and the Ahmadiyya founder. Webb accepted Islam in 1888 while he was US consul to the Philippines and, upon returning to the United States, created an Islamic mission in New York with a mosque and reading rooms, where he began to proselytize.³³ The most detailed account of Alexander Webb is found in his biography, published in 2006,³⁴ where it is recorded that he continued to promote Islam across the United States through study groups, writing and lecture tours, and that until his death in 1916 he remained the spokesperson for Islam in the United States.

Webb had published his own account of the reasons for his attraction to Islam in the book *Islam – Our Choice*,³⁵ and this account was reprinted in full in the Ahmadiyya history of their activities as part of their ongoing interest in the early American convert,³⁶ which arose from his prolonged contact with Mirza Ghulam

Ahmad. In 1886, two years before taking up his position in the Philippines, Webb had engaged in correspondence with Ahmad, which lasted until 1888 or even longer. His initial interest in Ahmad appears to have come about after reading one of Ahmad's *muhabila*, or prayer duels, in an advertisement placed in an American newspaper in which Ahmad issued a challenge to anyone who could refute his arguments concerning the authenticity of the Qur'an and the prophethood of Muhammad, offering a reward of several thousand dollars. In his first correspondence to Ahmad, Webb refers to a letter written by Ahmad to Scott, the editor of *The Daily Gazette*, claiming that he 'would show the truthfulness of the claims' he had made. Webb decided to write to Qadian, receiving a reply on 17 December 1886.³⁷ The contents of the letters reveal much about the spiritual journey of an important Western convert to Islam and the guidance offered by Ahmad in response to an earnest appeal for spiritual help. There were two letters, and in each case, the founder of the Ahmadiyya replied. Webb informs Ahmad that he has studied Buddhism, Hinduism and other Far Eastern religions but knows little about Muhammad. The letter reveals that Webb was still searching and felt drawn to Ahmad as a guide. He states, 'I am searching for the right path to truth. I have feelings of sincerity towards you'.³⁸

In the second letter, sent on 24 February 1887, he refers to Ahmad as one who 'knows the esoteric teachings of Mohammad, and not what is known to the masses of people as Mohammedanism'. Webb expresses his wish to go to India to meet with Ahmad, but speaks of his financial restraints and family commitments. However, he wishes Ahmad success in his mission and hopes one day 'that I may hear from you, and that we again may someday meet in spirit, even if we cannot meet in the body'. He finishes the letter with a frank acknowledgement that he would be happy to accept guidance from Ahmad: 'I too regret very much that I cannot understand your language, nor you mine; for I feel quite assured that you could tell me many things which I desire to know. If you can lead me into its blessed light you will find me not only a willing pupil but an anxious one'.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad replied in December 1886, sending Webb some pamphlets on Islam. Webb again wrote on 24 February 1887. He repeats that he is unable to visit India because of family and financial restraints, but asks Ahmad's advice regarding an idea that came to him as an alternative and makes an important request:

It occurred to me that I might with your aid assist in spreading the truth here. If, as you say, the Mohammedan is the only true religion, why could I not act as its

apostle or promulgator in America? My opportunities for doing so seem to me very good, if I had someone to lead me aright at first ... The public mind, I think is now more than ever fitted to receive Mohammedanism as well as Buddhism and it may be through you that it is to be introduced to my country.

This would appear to be Webb's first awareness that he could be the apostle of Islam in the United States, and he goes on to offer Ahmad his assistance in finding outlets for Ahmadiyya publications:

I shall be happy to receive from you at any time matter which you may have for general circulation, and if you should see fit to use my services to further the aims of truth in the country, they will be freely at your disposal, provided, of course, that I am capable of receiving your ideas and that they convince me of their truth. I am already well-satisfied that Mohammad taught the truth, that he pointed out the way to salvation and that those who follow his teachings will attain to a condition of eternal bliss.³⁹

Ahmad's reply reveals his paramount concern to promote Islam in the West. He states:

The contents of the letter not only increased my love towards you that led to me a hope of partial realization for the object which I have in view for which I have dedicated the whole of my life, viz, not to confine the spread of the light of truth to the Oriental world, but as far as it lies in my power to further it in Europe, America and Co. where the attention of the people has not been sufficiently attracted towards the proper understanding of teachings of Islam.⁴⁰

This reply is a clear indication that Ahmad was seriously considering his role as an emissary of Islam to Europe and North America. Both Ahmad and Webb flirt with the possibility of mutual support for each other's desire to transport Islam to North America, and Webb feels strongly enough to suggest that he become Ahmad's student. This did not come to pass, but it is clear that the correspondence with Ahmad was influential in Webb's final decision to accept Islam.

Webb's conversion took place early in 1888, nearly one year after his correspondence with Ahmad.⁴¹ Members of the Ahmadiyya, or at least individuals who had at one time been sympathetic towards Ahmad or would later become followers, were part of Webb's conversion to Islam in Manila and his subsequent travels to India. Webb's connection to India began with correspondence with Budruddin Abdulla Kur, a merchant from Bombay, and several articles published in *The Allahabad Review*. In both cases, Webb returns to the theme raised in his letters to Ahmad, namely the possibility of an Islamic mission to

America. The key difference is that Webb is now a Muslim and seeks support to initiate the project. Kur was to publish his correspondence with Webb in several Indian newspapers, 'creating a stir among Indian Muslims' with regard to a 'Mohammedan Mission to the American Continent'.⁴² Kur put Webb in touch with Abdulla Arab, who was known for financially supporting Islamic causes. They began to correspond in March 1891, and Webb invited Arab to Manila. Hajee Abdulla Arab, a wealthy, devout merchant from Calcutta, is mentioned as an active participant in the London Mission just after the end of World War I.⁴³

In Manila, the details of the American Mission were thrashed out and a funding committee established, with Kur as secretary. Arab returned to India and invited Webb to join him. In September 1892, he set sail for Singapore, Burma and India. Maulvi Hassan Ali, a well-known Muslim missionary from Bihar, was invited to join Webb and Arab in Bombay to accompany the party as a translator.⁴⁴ Maulvi Hassan Ali has also been linked to the Ahmadiyya, and their sources recount that he reported a conversation that took place in Hyderabad about visiting Mirza Ghulam Ahmad when the party reached Lahore. Webb declared that Ahmad had done him 'a great favour' by bringing him to Islam.⁴⁵

During the period that Webb was converting to Islam and visiting India, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad announced his role as the Promised Messiah and Apostle of God for all religions. It was decided not to visit Qadian because of Ahmad's growing and controversial reputation and the damage it might do to their fundraising efforts on behalf of an American Islamic Mission.⁴⁶ According to Ali, Webb decided to write to Ahmad, and he received an eight-page reply. There is evidence that Webb remained in touch with Ahmad and regretted his decision not to visit Qadian. When he was back in the United States, he appeared to use Ahmad has a sounding board for his attempts to create a Muslim community of converts there. Webb had written to Ahmad in 1907, complaining of the materialism of the American people and expressing his disappointment at their responses to his efforts to promote Islam.⁴⁷ Ahmadiyya sources reveal a conversation between Ahmad and some of his close followers showing that he was not happy with the contents of the letter and reciting a Persian couplet: 'The words that come from the heart reach the heart'. He continues, 'If Webb had tried whole-heartedly his influence would surely have touched the people', and further elaborates:

For what reason does Webb criticize America whereas he should criticize his own self. He has not given the due attention to our Silsila rather he returned from Hindustan in a maligning manner. In my opinion Abdulla Quilliam is far better than him who has formed a Jama'at [community] of Muslims.⁴⁸

It would appear that Webb's relying on the advice of Ali and Arab not to visit Qadian rankled Ahmad, and Muhammad Hasan Amrohi, one of the early followers, revealed that 'Huzoor [Ahmad] made a prophecy concerning Webb when he was desirous of visiting that he would not come, rather would turn back. And the reason for which he returned that was not achieved, and thus had to face embarrassment'.⁴⁹ In spite of the admonishment of Ahmad, Webb would remain in touch with the movement, regularly subscribing to and commenting on *The Review of Religions*. He also wrote to Ahmad, expressing his enthusiasm for his book on Islam and requesting its translation into English, as Americans did not appear very impressed with the miracles performed by Ahmad.⁵⁰ In a letter to Mufti Muhammad Sadiq in 1902, Webb makes his feelings clear and regrets listening to the advice of the Indian businessmen. He writes:

I regret that I did not meet with the Promised Messiah. When I went to India I was convinced that Muslim brothers would help me. Faithless Muslims talked me out of meeting the Promised Messiah. Now I have understood why they did this. Their Knowledge of Islam was superficial. If they had continued their loyalty to me the Islam we see in India would have come to America.⁵¹

Muhammad Sadiq claims that Webb corresponded with Ahmad until the latter's death. He notes that a 'Mr Anderson', who embraced Islam on 26 September 1904, was introduced to the movement by Webb.⁵²

Shortly before his death in 1908, Ahmad went to Lahore. On 12 May, he was visited by Clement Wragge (1852–1922), a renowned astronomer and meteorologist, who was on a lecture tour of India. He was accompanied by his wife, of Anglo-Indian background, and his son. In 1886 Wragge had been a founding member of the Royal Meteorological Society of Australia.⁵³ Wragge lived in Australia and New Zealand but was British by birth. He had delivered a lecture on astronomy in Lahore that was attended by Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, who invited him to meet Ahmad. In Muhammad Sadiq's words:

Then I asked him have you ever met a Prophet of Allah? After asking this question I informed him regarding the advent and the claims of the Promised Messiah (AS) as the Messiah and Imam Mahdi. I then presented arguments proving the truthfulness of his claims. He was pleased with the things I had told him. He said I have travelled around the world but I have not yet met a prophet of Allah and I am in search of such person. And he himself expressed his desire of meeting the Promised Messiah (AS).⁵⁴

Clement Wragge returned to meet Ahmad on 18 May. He was in many ways typical of the educated converts to Islam who would form the later communities

in London and Woking. Wragge had visited the Middle East, touring Egypt and Palestine as a young man in 1874. He was to meet with early Mormons in Jerusalem, and visited Brigham Young in Salt Lake City in August 1875. His second wife was a Theosophist. Like Quilliam, he was a polymath, writing on religion, meteorology and astronomy.⁵⁵ His interest in new religions, his marriage to a Theosophist, his extensive travel in the Middle East and India would all indicate a searching disposition. As a scientist, he was sceptical of Christian narratives of the world's origin and clearly unsettled by the Christian theological doctrine of the Atonement. His questioning of Ahmad is revealing of the concerns of so many British converts to Islam. The full interview between Wragge and Ahmad is recorded in Ahmadiyya sources (Appendix). The interview shows that Wragge was moving towards the idea that the Creator of the Universe is larger than any one religion and is seeking the 'Truth'. His scientific study of astronomy, as with Quilliam's study of geology, propelled him towards reconciling science and religion and created doubts concerning the Genesis account of creation. Both men thought about evolution but were not prepared to move away from the conviction that the universe was created by one God and that the human race has a special place in creation. Wragge questioned Christianity, believing it was wrong in its central premise, that humans evolve from higher to lower (the Fall), and although he agreed with evolutionary theory, in which the process is reversed (lower to higher), it was the ideal of spiritual evolution that he held on to. He asked Ahmad about sin, its origin and its purpose, the nature of the afterlife and the nature of God. Ahmad's answers appear to satisfy him, and he states, 'I am very happy to see that your religion is in accordance with science' (see Appendix).

According to Ahmadiyya accounts, Wragge and his wife converted to Islam and took *bai'at* from Ahmad. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq's biography states that he kept receiving letters from Wragge in Australia and New Zealand after Ahmad's death.⁵⁶ Mirza Ghulam Ahmad passed away on 26 May 1908, only eight days after this last conversion of a Westerner through personal contact with him.

Although Alexander Webb was an American, I have included a detailed account of his contact with Ahmad to illustrate the involvement of Indian Muslims and their desire to assist Islamic missions in the West. The connections to Ahmadiyya might suggest that Webb's contacts were influenced by Ahmad's conviction, or possibly that a growing number of Indian Muslims, such as Hasan Ali and Abdulla Arab, excited at the idea of taking Islam to the West, were becoming aware of the small presence of active converts, particularly in Britain. Arab was certainly aware of Abdullah Quilliam, and advised

Webb to visit the LMI on his way back from India to the United States.⁵⁷ Indian fund-raising also took place to assist Quilliam's efforts in Liverpool, although it was never a major part of his support.⁵⁸ Arguably, it required one of the more resourceful Indian Islamic reform movements to provide the impetus to commit to mission in the West, but other than Anjuman-i Islamia, the attention of these movements was on the crisis caused by loss of power in India or their rivalries with each other.

For Ahmad and the newly created Ahmadiyya, it was central to their mission to promote Islam in the West. In this chapter, it has been demonstrated that Ahmad was certainly knowledgeable of the activities of Muslim converts in Britain, especially the work of Abdullah Quilliam in Liverpool, and remained an inspiration for Alexander Webb in the United States in spite of their differences. British or North American converts were also becoming aware of him through his media challenges and his use of English as a main vehicle for the defence of Islam. He was able to attract a small number of educated Westerners to his message and, in addition, his early followers included educated Indians fluent in English and familiar with the British milieu, who were able to create an active English-language printing press and publishing house, producing important literature capable of bringing Ahmad's message to a Western audience. Among these publications, *The Review of Religions* was the most significant, and was consciously published with an intention to promote Islam in the English-speaking world. Ahmad would appear to be the first of the nineteenth-century Indian Islamic reformers to make it his intention to support Western converts and harness them as part of a new initiative to revive Islam from the heart of the British Empire.

Ahmad never ceased seeking ways to promote his message in the West. In spite of only a small handful of Westerners meeting him in Qadian, he sought the missionary who could take his work to Britain and the United States. Once he said to Muhammad Ali,

I always pray and it is my desire for a person from among the Europeans to stand up and dedicate part of his life [for the service of Islam]. However it is imperative for such person to spend some time in my company and gradually learn those principles as a result of which all the blemishes concerning the people of Islam can be removed.⁵⁹

It was not to be. Perhaps his rancour with Alexander Webb arose from the hope that Webb was this longed-for personage. When the missionary impulse to the West would finally come to fruition, it would be from the educated Indian

companions with whom he had invested so much time and energy and who had already begun the pioneering work to create and circulate the English literature containing Ahmad's teachings of Islam, rather than a longed-for Western convert to Islam.

There would be a major challenge to overcome that few had envisaged. Webb had not agreed that the Islamic Mission in the West required any knowledge of the specific doctrines that made Ahmadiyya unique. For that reason he departed India without visiting Qadian. The two issues of *Masih* and *Khatm-e-Nubuwwat* were at the heart of Ahmad's understanding of his prophetic role and separated him from other Indian reform movements. Webb would promote Islam in the United States without drawing attention to these doctrines, and they were never a part of Quilliam's lecturing on Islam in Britain, nor received a mention from other converts familiar with Qadian. In the next chapter, the arrival of the first missionaries from Qadian will be documented, in particular their establishing the existing mosque at Woking as the centre of activities. It will be seen that some among Ahmad's own followers would raise doubts that the more controversial doctrines of the new dispensation should be taught in the West, feeling that the focus of the missionary thrust should remain on the basic teachings of Islam, sufficient only to secure conversion.

Islamic Mission to Britain: Woking

Ahmad died on 26 May 1908, to be succeeded by Mawlana Hakeem Noor-ud-Din (1841–1914), who would be elected to his position as the first of the movement's caliphs. Noor-ud-Din had been the first person to offer formal allegiance to Ahmad and was highly respected among the followers. For a period of six years until his death in 1914, he would continue Ahmad's strategy of active rebuttal of Islam's opponents in India, especially Christian missionaries and the various spokesmen for the Hindu reform movement, the Arya Samaj. Under Noor-ud-Din's leadership, development of the movement's promotional literature continued and an English translation of the Qur'an was started, a project first promoted by Ahmad. The translation of the Qur'an demonstrated that the new leader remained alert to Ahmad's intention to establish Islam in the English-speaking world. The translation was completed in 1917, and although promoted throughout the world by the movement, it has never been given prominence among English-speaking Muslims as was hoped, partly due to its Ahmadiyya origins, but perhaps because of the appearance of the version published by the English convert Marmaduke Pickthall in 1930, which is far more literal and therefore regarded as one of the most accurate renderings of the Qur'an universally.

These important continuations of Ahmad's mission pale into insignificance compared to the first arrival of a missionary in Britain, the beginning of a period of Ahmadiyya spiritual leadership over British Muslims and its central place in the promotion of Islam in and from London until the advent of World War II, and the subsequent arrival of South Asian Muslim migrants in the second half of the twentieth century. The same would be true of North America and Germany, but both of these missions would be initiated by missionaries working out of London. This missionary thrust to the West would be spearheaded by figures identified by Ahmad from among his most erudite English-speaking followers, who had benefitted from British-influenced education in India.

During Noor-ud-Din's period as caliph, some of the prominent British converts mentioned in Chapters 5 and 6 developed their contacts with Qadian, often providing articles for the English version of *The Review of Religions*. They were on the subscription list when the journal was launched in 1902, and less than a decade later some of them were regular contributors. Yahya Parkinson's article 'Thoughts' appeared in December 1910, followed by the poem 'Meditations', published in May 1911, and the article 'The Expansion of Christianity' in June. This was followed closely by Khalid Sheldrake's 'Christianity and Slavery' in July and Yahya Parkinson's 'Some Critics and their Criticism' in August, followed by a further poem in October. Possibly the first historical account of contacts between Britain and Muslims was written by Khalid Sheldrake in 1912, entitled 'Muslims in England' and translated into Urdu for publication in 1913.¹ Between these various contributions was a plea by Parkinson to assist Muslim sailors in Liverpool.² Parkinson bemoaned the loss of the Liverpool mosque, complaining, 'now the mosque exists no longer; it has been sold and is now in other hands'.³ Sheldrake also mentioned Abdullah Quilliam's efforts in Liverpool and mysteriously explained that he knew the reason for his sudden departure to Constantinople, leaving Britain's Muslims without a focus point to organize their efforts.⁴ Perhaps the most telling sentiment expressed by Parkinson was a plea translated into Urdu and published in the Ahmadiyya newspaper, *al-Haqm*. Parkinson emotionally states that the burning question for him is, What is the state of Muslims in England? He goes on to say that there was a time when Islam was 'spreading in its all its glory' and poetically asks if 'Autumn' has arrived already for the efforts to bring the religion to the nation. He pleads:

Is this not the time when we should be thinking about establishing Islam in England? There are offices of most religions here in England. Only we seem to be the ones which do not care. It is only because we do not have a masjid? We do not have enough people to raise such a thing. Maybe we do not care. Surely to establish a jamaat of this sort, there shouldn't be that much difficulty.⁵

The loss of Quilliam appears to be felt by these substantial converts. It must be surmised that these emotional pleas made by British Muslims energized the issue of *tabligh* (mission) in Qadian. The occasion to commence missionary activity in Britain in 1912 would come about from an unexpected opportunity.

Two years after Parkinson's heartfelt appeal, a missionary would arrive from India intent on resurrecting the efforts to promote Islam in Britain. On 24 September 1912, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din (1870–1932) arrived in London. He personified the elite group of companions whom Ahmad had groomed for the

role of bringing Islam to the English-speaking world. He had been educated at the highly respected Forman Christian College in Lahore and came from an upper-class background. His grandfather Abdur Rashid was, at one time, chief Muslim judge of Lahore during the Sikh period. He had joined the Ahmadiyya movement in 1893 at the age of twenty-two. Ahmad had entrusted him with the editorship of the fledgling *Review of Religions*, and he had already proved himself a formidable and erudite champion of Islam, speaking throughout India.⁶ He did not go to Britain with missionary intent and was not sent by the movement, but he quickly saw the opportunity to take up the role of India's foremost Muslim missionary to the West. Kamal-ud-Din was a lawyer by profession and was invited to represent an Indian claimant in a court case in London. His son Nazir Ahmad describes the reasons for his father's journey:

Hazrat Khwaja sahib started touring all over India from 1908 onwards, delivering lectures on Islam in various cities. In this connection he was in Bombay in 1912, giving lectures. At one meeting there was a Nawab from Hyderabad Deccan, now deceased. The Nawab went to see the Khwaja at his place of stay and, during the conversation, asked him to go to England in pursuance of a legal case. He paid the Khwaja a reasonable fee, apart from the fare for the passage, and also gave him sufficient funds for a two year stay in England. Upon Khwaja sahib's request he gave him permission to do the work of the propagation of Islam while in England. After purchasing the sea ticket, the Khwaja sahib informed Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din by telegram and went to Qadian to see him.⁷

Although Kamal-ud-Din was not sent by the Ahmadiyya leader as a missionary, it is nonetheless apparent that he received the blessings of Noor-ud-Din and that the Ahmadiyya saw the opportunity to further the ambitions of their founder. If anything, the official line of the movement's leadership was to downplay the professional role of Kamal-ud-Din as a lawyer. The first mention of his departure in an organ of the Ahmadiyya states:

Whatever may be the source of his expenses, the fact is that it is his zeal to propagate Islam, and his passion to take the religion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad to all corners of the world, which has found for him out of the grace of God the means of taking him to distant shores.⁸

The response of the Ahmadiyya to the first missionary in London was adulatory, with a number of poems written in his praise and published in *Badr*.⁹ Kamal-ud-Din's writings are revealing of not only his attitudes towards the tone of the poems, but, perhaps more significantly, his first impressions of London and his

trepidation at the expectations of Muslims excited at the prospect of mission in Britain. He considers London's population to be irreligious, or at least holding only a nominal allegiance to Christianity. He writes to the editor of *Badr*:

Reading these poems makes me burst into tears: O God, the high expectations that my community has of me, I am not able to fulfil them. I did not promise anyone that I am going as a preacher of Islam ... O Lord, I am overcome, so help me. I am in a place of trial, where all around there are means of profligate living, indulgence and sport. Wherever you look, people are busy in a strange way. The thought of God long left the minds of people here ... There is no talk of religion, nor any interest in it. What can I do? O God, my own community and my other Muslim brethren are looking towards me with expectant eyes.¹⁰

The doubt expressed by the words 'I did not promise anyone that I am going as a preacher of Islam', is resolved in the letter's final paragraph:

Your Islam will definitely spread in this land. Those spreading it will, after all, only be human. But if You, O Lord, by Your grace, can make a sinful and incapable man worthy of doing every kind of work, then listen to the prayer of this distantly-located one. You, O Lord, know well that today I have no worldly business in England.¹¹

The letter was written in January 1913 and suggests that Islamic mission had become his paramount intention. Despite his legal work, Kamal-ud-Din instantly found time to begin inspiring Muslims in Britain and plant the seeds for the creation of new converts. On arrival in London, he stayed with an apparent Ahmadiyya sympathizer, Dr Ibadullah from Amritsar,¹² but by October 1912 he had rented premises for Muslim students in London to maintain Friday prayers, where he functioned as their imam.¹³ In November, *Badr* informed its readers that he was 'receiving teaching in English public speaking'.¹⁴ In the same month, he celebrated Eid at London's Caxton Hall, attended by fifty to sixty people, and reported that a room had been rented for '45 rupees per month' to conduct prayers and receive enquirers concerning Islam. A poster had been distributed to make the public aware of the venue, and he had commenced writing a booklet to explain the truths of Islam.¹⁵ By 12 December 1912, the court case was successfully resolved and Kamal-ud-Din was free to dedicate his energies solely to the promotion of Islam. In February 1913, he inaugurated *The Islamic Review*, a timely opportunity to produce a journal to replace Abdullah Quilliam's monthly journal, *The Islamic World*, which had ceased publication along with the weekly newspaper *The Crescent* when Quilliam left Britain for Constantinople in 1908.

Kamal-ud-Din's arrival in Britain would fill the vacuum created by the loss of the Liverpool mosque as the main hub for Britain's Muslim population. From Parkinson's pleading it can be seen that British converts desired both a mosque and an organizational footing for Islamic activity. Some Ahmadiyya sources claim that Noor-ud-Din had given Kamal-ud-Din three instructions on arriving in London, one of which was to reopen the Woking mosque.¹⁶ Certainly in a letter to Kamal-ud-Din in October 1912, Noor-ud-Din wrote, 'I had heard that there is a mosque in London and it is in Woking. Dr. Leitner had collected donations for the mosque'.¹⁷ The mosque would re-emerge as the principal centre for Islamic activity in Britain until the middle of the twentieth century, and it is worth dwelling upon the correspondence of Kamal-ud-Din to see some of the symbolic and emotional capital that the recovery of the mosque would engender.

To commemorate its fiftieth anniversary, *The Islamic Review* published an article in memory of Kamal-ud-Din that provided a condensed account of the rediscovery of Woking's mosque. The article states that before accessing the mosque as his centre of operations, Kamal-ud-Din had settled in Richmond, from where he would lecture on Islam at Speaker's Corner, the celebrated symbol of free speech located at Hyde Park Corner. In addition, he gained invitations to various theological and theosophical meetings in London.¹⁸

According to the article, Kamal-ud-Din visited Woking with a close friend, Chaudhry Zafrullah Khan (1893–1985), who had left the Punjab to study law at King's College in 1911. Zafrullah Khan was an active Ahmadi and the son of one of the early followers of Ahmad, and he would always remain prominent in the movement. In later life he would become the celebrated Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, the first foreign minister of Pakistan.¹⁹ It is possible that he was the first Ahmadiyya in London, and probably helped Kamal-ud-Din with his organization of prayers for Muslim students at the university in 1912. Zafrullah Khan recorded meeting the first caliph for his blessings before departing for London, recalling the advice given to him. Noor-ud-Din advised, 'In England seek the company of its nobility instead of mingling all the time with the Indian students'.²⁰

They would both stay at the mosque for several hours after finding it in 'desolate condition'. Passionately convinced that a 'house of God' could not fall into decay, they determined to stay near the mosque and moved into a house nearby. The heirs of Dr Leitner tried to have them evicted and to forestall their efforts to restore and reopen the mosque. Kamal-ud-Din approached Sir Mirza Abbas Ali Beg, the Muslim advisor to the Council of the Secretary of State for India, and together they found a solution. A trust was formed to hold the title deeds of the



Figure 2 A postcard of Woking (Shah Jehan) mosque circa 1920. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore (UK), Wembley, London, 2017.

mosque, and in 1913 it reopened with Kamal-ud-Din as imam.²¹ Kamal-ud-Din wrote three letters back to Qadian that were published in *Badr* and recounted the visits and the feelings generated by the mosque's discovery.

In the first letter, Kamal-ud-Din describes the mosque lyrically to Noor-ud-Din, focusing on its Islamic architecture²² and its history, and notes that 'after much effort, the mosque, courtyard, the memorial hall and some acres of land were separated and became a trust along with the mosque'.²³ In 1916, Kamal-ud-Din stated that he found the floor of the mosque 'chock-full of straw and other rubbish, the accumulations of the many years during which its doors had remained closed'.²⁴ He recounts that they found a Qur'an inside the building, which they opened at random. Kamal-ud-Din felt that the passage revealed at the top of the right-hand page was a sign to them.

Certainly the first house appointed for men is the one at Bakka, blessed and a guidance for the nations. In it are clear signs: the place of Abraham; and whoever enters it is safe; and pilgrimage is a duty which men owe to Allah, whoever can find a way to it. And whoever disbelieves, surely Allah is above need of the worlds.²⁵

Kamal-ud-Din expressed his dismay that after four months without even a sight of a Muslim place of worship, he had entered a mosque just outside London complete with a Qur'an inside. The two Muslim visitors would pray. In Kamal-ud-Din's words:

We made a lengthy prostration, crying and pleading to be given the opportunity for the preaching and propagation of Islam, and praying that the mosque may become the place for the dawn of the light of Islam. This mosque, in a non-Muslim land, is truly 'the first house appointed for men'. What a wonder if God were to make it an Islamic centre.²⁶

In the second letter, Kamal-ud-Din reported that he was invited to lead the Friday prayers at a function organized by Leitner's son.²⁷ The date was probably 17 January 1913. Kamal-ud-Din mentions the condition of foreign Muslims in England to show the progress he had made, but remains aware of the need to reach out to the British.

You are aware that whatever reform we manage to bring about in the religious condition of the people of Europe, that is yet to be seen, but the condition of our own people is bad enough. The young Muslims here have very little to do with Islam. The first thing I did after arriving in England was to gather them together by means of *Jumu'a* prayers. As a result of the efforts of a few months, there is a sizeable gathering for *Jumu'a*. When we went to Woking on Friday there were some twenty Muslim students with us.²⁸

The *khutba* (sermon) was delivered in English, and Kamal-ud-Din took the opportunity to inspire his audience.

My dears, this is your mosque. After the death of its builder it remained locked in the hands of non-Muslims for long. Today it is in your hands. But what is the difference between its past and present conditions if no one prays in it? Why are you happy today if no Muslim will come here to take the name of God? If it is again going to be locked, why are we celebrating today?²⁹

The third letter, written in the summer of 1913, records Kamal-ud-Din's optimistic outlook on the mosque:

Brethren! Allah willing, that time is very near when you will hear the good news from me that I am permanently settled in a place where five times a day the Azan is called out loudly and prayer is held ... The first part of the prayers which I said in the locked-up Woking Mosque four months ago is shortly to attain fulfilment. Of course, this is a time for prayer. God is providing the resources so that this

worthless person will sit in a place which the whole world can see as a recognisable centre for the propagation of Islam.³⁰

On 12 August 1913, during the month of Ramadan, Kamal-ud-Din took possession of Woking mosque along with two companions, one of whom was Noor Ahmad, whom he had met on board ship when travelling to London, and who took up the role of *muezzin* and his private secretary. Noor Ahmad is clearly inspired by his role as *muezzin* and compares himself with Bilal:

[T]here is one burning desire in my heart, that in the land of non-Muslims I should deliver the azan like Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him. Khwaja sahib re-assured me, saying: 'God has provided the resources. Shortly a mosque will come under our charge, and if it does then the azan will be called out from it'.³¹

The first azan was called on the ninth day of Ramadan, and on 15 August 1913, the first congregation of British Muslims gathered together in *jumu'a* prayer at Woking under the leadership of Kamal-ud-Din, who was ecstatic.

I am wondering if this is a dream or reality. In England, which is a place of worship of false beliefs, there is a mosque locked up for 25 years. Its builder, God have mercy on him, decides to have Sura Ikhlas written above the mihrab, thinking that perhaps through this mosque the worship of God 'Who is One, on Whom all depend, Who begets not nor is He begotten' will be taught.³²

On 22 August 1913, Kamal-ud-Din wrote to Noor-ud Din: 'Today is the second Friday when we are going to pray in this mosque. At present there are only three of us. May Allah soon increase the congregation. Sir, please pray for this'.³³ In 1930, Kazi Abdul Haq referred to the conditions imposed by Leitner and how they had been overcome.

The late Doctor Leitner, who built the Mosque with the Bhopal money, published a letter in the early nineties in the London Press in which he maintained that the Mosque was intended only for a few selected persons and could in no case be regarded as a centre of Muslim activities in England, far less as the headquarters for a campaign for the conversion of English people to Islam. But coming events were to give his words the lie. The Mosque is not only the centre of Muslim religious activity in the British Isles but the seat of the Islamic Mission that has witnessed hundreds of conversions to Islam.³⁴

It was with incredible perspicacity that Kamal-ud-Din succeeded in securing the abandoned mosque and establishing it as a centre for Islamic activity in a way never permitted by its original founder.³⁵ The re-emergence of the mosque provided a renewed focus for Britain's Muslims and completely compensated for

the loss of the mosque in Liverpool. The focus of Islamic activity would be close to the capital city rather than the northern port of Liverpool, but many of the key players to rally around Kamal-ud-Din were the same British converts who had been inspired by Quilliam, only now complemented by Indian Muslims present in the capital in ever greater numbers. Kamal-ud-Din would soon add converts gained by his own endeavours. The re-emergence of the Woking mosque may have been the inspiration for Abdullah Quilliam to reappear in London after a period of uncertainty and in his new identity as Henri de Léon.

Although Kamal-ud-Din's first activity was to secure a place of prayer for Muslim students in London, he was quick to begin the work of conversion of native-born British. The first convert was Violet Ebrahim, the daughter of a British army colonel, who would embrace Islam sometime early in 1913. *Badr* reports that Kamal-ud-Din had written to Noor-ud-Din to celebrate the conversion. Kamal-ud-Din records the colour of her dress and writes, 'Could this not be the first of those white birds whose wings, that is to say dress, the Hazrat [Mirza Ghulam Ahmad] saw as *khaki* in his vision?'³⁶ In December 1913, Qadian published a letter from Violet Ebrahim in which she recounts the story of her conversion. Her conversations with Kamal-ud-Din at her home when he visited her husband reveal his approach to interested people.

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din has studied Christianity and therefore he is better able to make comparisons as to what is said in the Bible on different subjects and how Al-Koran treats the same subject, thereby proving how superior Islam was to Christianity. My eyes were beginning to open in favour of Islam and gradually I found that I was Moslem at heart.³⁷

Kamal-ud-Din was not only able to compare Islam favourably with Christianity, but his education permitted him to argue that Islam was more in tune with current Western philosophy. In a letter back to Qadian in late 1912, he wrote:

We cannot conquer Europe by sword and canon, but if we show them that the principles that they are following are found in a better form in the Quran there is no reason why they should not accept the supremacy of the Quran. Read the writing of any European philosopher and you will see that, being disenchanted with the culture and civilization of Europe, he is proposing a new culture that is very close to the Holy Quran.³⁸

Kamal-ud-Din's understanding of how to communicate Islam to the European mind convinced him that 'pen and paper' was the best means forward, but he remained highly suspicious of the print quality of Indian Islamic productions and leaned towards British-quality journals.³⁹ It would seem that Kamal-ud-Din was

drawn to an approach that paralleled Abdullah Quilliam's, that is, a British mosque led by British Muslims and with British Muslim organizations supported by British publications. In fact, it would appear that he was even opposed to the idea of Indian missionaries unless they were able to become 'famous and renowned'. He writes to India, in the same letter, 'to send a missionary here as a lecturer to propagate Islam is not a way for which this country is ready yet'.⁴⁰ This position was not accepted in Qadian, and in less than a year a new missionary would arrive.

Kamal-ud-Din's success in converting British men and women would continue. By the end of 1913, he informs Qadian that two men and two women had converted and that a woman of 'noble family' had met with him and confessed that she had already converted but was not ready to publicly reveal her new religion at the express wish of her husband. However, she intended to raise her children as Muslims.⁴¹ It is possible that Kamal-ud-Din was referring to Lady Evelyn Cobbold (1867–1963), daughter of the seventh Earl of Dunmore (1841–1907) and wife of the Suffolk brewer John Dupuis Cobbold (1861–1929). Lady Cobbold was very private regarding religion, but she had travelled to Libya in 1911 with a female friend, and in her diary of the journey demonstrates her love for Islam. She writes, 'To believe in Allah and His Prophet, to wait without fear or impatience the inevitable hour of death, this is the simple faith of Islam', and in another entry, 'Truly is Islam a powerful and great force'.⁴² According to William Facey and Miranda Taylor, who wrote the introduction to her autobiography, Lady Cobbold appeared to have acknowledged her conversion to Islam in a dinner with Marmaduke Pickthall in Claridges in late 1914, or at least she tried to persuade him to embrace Islam before two Muslim waiters as witnesses.⁴³ She was to remain in touch with Kamal-ud-Din and the Woking Muslim Mission (WMM) until his death, although she was not a regular visitor to the mosque.⁴⁴ She was the first British woman to perform Hajj.⁴⁵

Although Kamal-ud-Din was not instrumental in Evelyn Cobbold's conversion, other members of the British aristocracy and upper classes who were already drawn to Muslim culture and the religion of Islam were able, finally, to formally and publicly declare their conversion under the missionary's inspiration. The last issue of *The Review of Religions* in 1913 carried the news of the conversion of a British peer to Islam, and in the same issue, the letter from Violet Ebrahim declared:

Our readers will have already learned of the conversion of Lord Headley (1855–1935).⁴⁶ There are others, both ladies and gentleman, who have informed our missionary, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, of their acceptance of Islam and it is hoped that like Lord Headley they will soon publicly announce their conversion.⁴⁷

The British media had already picked up on the news. Rowland George Allanson-Winn was the fifth Baron Headley, the baronetcy having been established in Ireland in 1797. Although the previous baronets had represented Britain in the Houses of Parliament, this was not the case for the fifth baron, but his conversion was bound to be reported and discussed. *The Times* declared in November 1913:

At a meeting of the Islamic Society held in London on Saturday evening, it was announced that Lord Headley has become a convert to the Mahomedan faith. At a letter read at the meeting Lord Headley wrote 'Those who know me will believe I am perfectly sincere in my belief'.⁴⁸



Figure 3 Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din with Lord Headley soon after his conversion to Islam in 1913. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore (UK), Wembley, London, 2017.

Lord Headley took the Muslim name Rahmatullah al-Farooq and remained very close to Kamal-ud-Din, even undertaking Hajj with him in July 1923. Lord Headley was prepared to be active on behalf of his new faith. He was the author of several books on Islam, including *A Western Awakening to Islam* (1914) and *Three Great Prophets of the World* (1923).⁴⁹ He took an active role in the WMM from 1913 and established the British Muslim Society (BMS) in 1914 with Khaled Sheldrake as secretary, Yahya Parkinson as vice president and Quilliam/de Léon as a founding member.⁵⁰ These high-profile converts and the subsequent media coverage gave a boost to the work of Kamal-ud-Din, and the new interest was paramount in Headley's decision to create the new organization. Parkinson hoped that the BMS would provide a platform for Muslim unity,⁵¹ whereas Headley was focused on Islam's ability to be adopted in the West without 'interfering in the manners and customs of the West or the spirit of the teachings that we find in the Qur'an'.⁵²

Marmaduke Pickthall (1875–1936) would declare his conversion to Islam on 29 November 1917 after delivering a lecture entitled 'Islam and Progress' at the Muslim Literary Society in Notting Hill, London.⁵³ The society was founded in 1916 with Abdullah Yusef Ali as its president⁵⁴; sponsored by the WMM, Ali's best-known work is his translation of the Qur'an into English, entitled *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*, begun in 1934. Educated in Britain, Yusef Ali was renowned for his defence of the British Empire. Awarded a CBE in 1917 for his service to the empire, he remained close to the WMM, becoming a trustee in later life. As late as 1943, he would lead Eid al-Fitr celebrations in Woking mosque.

Similar to Abdullah Quilliam, Pickthall's background was Christian. The madness of the First World War seems to have fuelled Pickthall's loss of faith, but there is no doubt that his interests in the East began earlier. His parents had groomed him for Foreign Office service, and on his failure to secure a position he sought a back-door entry through the Consular Service, hoping that learning the language and customs of the Levant region would boost his chances to succeed. He departed for Egypt in 1894, en route to Palestine, and his diaries would demonstrate a young man already enamoured with the exoticism of the East rather than the possibility of employment. He writes that, on arrival in Cairo, 'the European ceased to interest me'.⁵⁵ Pickthall was to translate the Qur'an into English in 1930, the first translation by a native English-speaking Muslim. He, too, would remain close to the WMM, often standing in for Kamal-ud-Din as imam when he was abroad, and editing *The Islamic Review* from 1919.

The Ahmadiyya publications, in both Urdu and English, continued to report the news from London. In July 1913, Kamal-ud-Din stated that the Woking

mosque had been active for six months but had been so private that even the neighbours did not know of the activities taking place there.⁵⁶ In September 1913, it was announced that the prayer call (*azan*) would be public five times a day and the London mission was now based in Woking.⁵⁷ In a sermon delivered in Qadian that summer, the caliph was able to say, 'There are a few of us in London. Some are studying, some are working, some are preaching. They are all dear to me. We are all one community'.⁵⁸

Any explanation of Kamal-ud-Din's success in Britain needs to assess a number of factors. In spite of his reservations that Britain was not yet ready for foreign Muslim missionaries, Kamal-ud-Din was able to succeed because he was of that class of Indians educated in the best of British schools founded in India and was as learned in Western culture and achievement as he was in Qur'an and Hadith. He could bridge orient and occident in a similar way to Abdullah Quilliam and drew upon parallel themes in his lectures and similar strategies in his mission. Quilliam, too, shared Kamal-ud-Din's hesitation with regard to Muslim missionaries from abroad, arguing that:

The Briton, with true insular pride, not unmixed with prejudice, will always decline to receive instruction from any person other than one of his own compatriots. This is one of the reasons why, until the promulgation of Islam in England by a Briton, a native of the soil, no progress was made by Islam in these islands of the west.⁵⁹

Kamal-ud-Din was not born in Britain, but arguably he was bred there; what is more, he understood, like Quilliam, that Islam had to be adapted to British mores in order to be successful. He was able to fill the void that was left by the collapse of Quilliam's mosque and institute in Liverpool. Around 600 converts were scattered around Britain, mainly as a result of Quilliam's efforts, and the most active were able to support Kamal-ud-Din, along with new converts such as Headley and Pickthall. Quilliam's brand of pan-Islamism promoted to the converts – that is, a unity of all Muslims under the umbrella of faith in Islam, usually compared unfavourably with Christian sectarianism – prevailed among the converts. Yahya Parkinson encapsulates the mood of British Muslims two years after Quilliam's departure and two years before Kamal-ud-Din's arrival when he pleads:

The beauties of Islam need to be presented to the people of England. All Muslims not involved in sectarian movements should read *Review of Religions* ... The only condition is that Muslims should endeavour to do this from their heart.⁶⁰

This continuation of the style of mission promoted in Liverpool by the Woking mosque is commented upon by Eric Germain when he declares, ‘The mission that Khwaja Kamaluddin (1870–1932) founded in Woking (Surrey) reactivated and increased Quilliam’s English reading public throughout Europe and within the British Empire’.⁶¹ It helped that the teachings of Ahmad corresponded in a number of ways with those of Quilliam. In both cases, there was not only tolerance, but positive support for the British Empire; both felt that the time for Islam to become dominant in the West had arrived and both perceived jihad not in terms of military conquest but as the final victory of Islam over Christianity – as Quilliam stated, ‘sacred jihad [sic] in the British Isles … a mighty work rests upon not one, but all of us’.⁶² It also helped that Kamal-ud-Din’s perspicuity enabled him to take possession of Woking mosque, the only overt architectural symbol of Islam in England. Although Quilliam had reservations concerning the Shah Jehan mosque in Woking during Leitner’s life, he had no such qualms with Kamal-ud-Din’s occupancy.

Quilliam had returned from Constantinople sometime in late 1909 to be with his dying wife. He remarried in December 1910 and was living in Nottingham when Kamal-ud-Din arrived in London. Soon after the opening of the mosque in Woking, he moved to London, where he opened a college in Bloomsbury as the main outlet for the activities of his International Society for Philology, Science and the Arts, and began to publish its journal, *The Philomath*, from 1913. The name was changed to Societe Internationale de Philologie Sciences et Beaux-Arts, in keeping with his new identity as Henri de Léon. He remained active on behalf of Islam, working with Headley, Pickthall, Parkinson, Sheldrake and Kamal-ud-Din in a variety of ways. Although there would be differences between them on a variety of issues, not least the relationship with the Ottoman Empire when hostilities began in 1914, these influential converts would take up leadership roles in each other’s organizations⁶³ and, at one time or another, belong to the WMM, the new organization established by Kamal-ud-Din to promote Islam in Britain. They would also write for *The Islamic Review and Muslim India*, published by the WMM. Kamal-ud-Din had established the WMM soon after taking possession of the mosque, and the first issue of *Muslim India and the Islamic Review* (changed to *The Islamic Review and Muslim India* in 1914) went out in February 1913. Drawing upon his experience as editor of *The Review of Religions*, Kamal-ud-Din invited prominent British converts to submit articles. In June 1913, Yahya Parkinson’s article ‘Islam and the World’ appeared.

However, the key element of continuity between Quilliam and the LMI, active converts such as Sheldrake and Parkinson, and new converts such as

Headley was the need to create an Islam that moulded itself to British life. Arguably, this was deemed to be British upper-middle-class life, as one key difference between the WMM and the LMI was certainly class. Quilliam had been able to reach the working classes, both native Liverpudlians and the lascars (Asian seamen), along with prominent members of the upper classes, but Kamal-ud-Din, a lawyer and upper-class Indian, was most successful with his own class in British society. In the main, the WMM consisted of educated Indians, especially London University students and British converts from the upper levels of society. Generally, the work of the WMM was carried out in English and dress codes were lax. Normal British dress was worn by both men and women, including the innovation of wearing clean shoes at prayer. Women and men mixed freely, following the conventions of British Edwardian life rather than those of India or the Middle East, and despite the rivalry with Christianity, Islamic terminology was Christianized, for example, the Qur'an became 'the Islamic Bible', the mosque was the 'Muslim church' and the *minbar* was the pulpit. Men and women prayed together in the mosque at Woking. The attitude towards Christianity was one of tolerance, at least to the degree that Christianity and Judaism were promoted as companion monotheistic religions sharing the same God and Prophets. However, the current condition of Christianity was argued to be a deviation from the original faith of Jesus, and Islam was presented as the religion of reason, classless and tolerant, more in tune with the spirit of the age. Jamie Gilham describes the WMM's missionaries as promoting 'a rational, liberal, syncretic form of Anglo-Islam which caught the attention of enough Britons to spur them on'.⁶⁴ Humayun Ansari observes that 'Islam was presented as a progressive moral force', adopting an approach with which audiences were familiar. He states, 'Islam needed to be made indigenous, as it had been elsewhere. It could not expand if it was perceived as an "alien" or "exotic" religion practised by people whose traits the majority population regarded as inferior. These Muslims trod delicately'.⁶⁵ Kamal-ud-Din played this role to perfection.

According to Pickthall's estimation, 'he had a gift for summing up a train of arguments in striking form but not devoid of literary grace'.⁶⁶ The missionary from Qadian had discovered a new way of communicating Islam that departed from the traditional arguments and style of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) used by the Indian Islamic revivalists of the nineteenth century and was more familiar to Western-educated audiences, including Indian and African Muslims. Yet, like Quilliam and Ahmad, they critiqued the validity of the Christian scriptures and the doctrines of incarnation and atonement, seen as out of kilter with the spirit



Figure 4 Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din with the first converts to Islam at the Woking Mosque, 1913. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore (UK), Wembley, London, 2017.

of reason, and challenged common misconceptions of Islam, especially on gender issues, slavery, polygamy and jihad.

Kamal-ud-Din's success rejuvenated the British converts. New Islamic activity sprung up in London, either led by the new converts or working together with existing British Muslims. By 1913, the Islamic Society had around 300 members, bringing together Indians and Ottoman Muslims with converts who included Sheldrake, Parkinson and Quilliam/de Léon, and in 1914 Kamal-ud-Din, inspired by the success of Woking and the rising number of conversions, created the BMS (later the Muslim Society of Great Britain) with Headley as president.

In spite of Kamal-ud-Din's reluctance towards foreign Islamic missionaries working in London and his patient efforts to build an Islam that converged with British society, which had encouraged him to create new organizations and promotional literature independent of Qadian, his success was noted and celebrated there. For both Kamal-ud-Din and his religious compatriots in India, the prophecy of Ahmad seemed to be reaching some kind of fulfilment. The sun of Islam was indeed rising in the West. This success would

lead to the Ahmadiyya leadership sending out more missionaries to work with Kamal-ud-Din. Sometime in 1913, Mirza Basheer-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad (1889–1965), the son of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, requested volunteers to assist in the missionary work in London and other places abroad, and funds were sought from the membership in India to finance the costs of travel. On 22 June 1913, Chaudhry Fateh Muhammad Sayyal (1887–1960) left Qadian, arriving in London in July, less than a year after the arrival of Kamal-ud-Din. The new missionary joined Kamal-ud-Din in Woking and began to work with him. Sayyal, like Kamal-ud-Din, belonged to the elite group of followers who had joined Ahmad as young men and felt compelled to dedicate their lives to the cause of reviving Islam. According to Ahmadiyya sources, at the age of twenty he had written a letter to Ahmad accepting the call to devote his life to Islam.⁶⁷ If this estimate of his age is correct, he would have been twenty-six years old on his arrival in London. Like Kamal-ud-Din, he belonged to the upper class of Indian Muslims educated at British schools. Sayyal received his bachelor's degree from Government College University in Lahore in 1910, and later continued his education at Aligarh University, where he completed a master's degree in Arabic.⁶⁸

By this time Kamal-ud-Din had established a method for communicating Islam in London and elsewhere in Britain, and certainly he expected that the new arrival would fit into the pattern of preaching that he had devised, but there were early indications that all was not well between the two men. Forty-three years old in 1913, Kamal-ud-Din was the older man and a successful barrister, and surely he felt that it was his mission, in the sense that he had successfully initiated it, gained control of Woking mosque, made inroads into British society and gained the respect of the existing British converts. Although Sayyal had been instructed by Noor-ud-Din to work with Kamal-ud-Din, he may have felt some tension between his status as the first Ahmadiyya Muslim to be sent to Britain as a missionary and Kamal-ud-Din's arrival in the country as a professional lawyer going about his profession.

Although such reasoning over their differences is speculative, by the early summer of 1914, real tension had developed between them. This would appear to have been caused by differences in regard to the new Ahmadiyya leadership. In spring 1914, *Al-Fazl* published a letter from Sayyal in which he commented on the situation in London:

Only Kamal-ud-din, Nur Ahmad, Zafrullah Khan have not given their bai'at. Zafrullah Khan is maybe travelling and does not reject the concept of caliphate

like Kamal-ud-din. All his family members have performed the *bai'at*. The only reason to mention this is because all these people are engaged in the efforts to spread the deen.⁶⁹

The issue of renewing the *bai'at* had arisen as a result of the death of Noor-ud-Din and the succession of Mirza Basheer-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, the son of the founder, as caliph. Kamal-ud-Din's refusal was part of a rejection of the second caliph's authority by some prominent followers that would divide the movement. Yet there seemed to be existing problems when the two missionaries worked together. The same article goes on to say:

We are disappointed that Kamal-ud-Din always took the work of writing from him (Sayyal). He is a good lecturer but Kamal-ud-Din stopped his series of lectures in Woking. The last lecture in the series was by Khalid Sheldrake, Kamal-ud-din answered the questions.⁷⁰

In all respects, there appears to be very little difference in the two missionaries' approach to mission or the methods they were using. The article finishes:

The 'grasp of Christianity has become very loose in England'. Muslims have high regard for Jesus but do not accept atonement or trinity to be true. Europe has begun to ponder such things since the last century. Islam is opposed to the moral ills of our age – intoxicants. No need to reject any prophet. A person becomes the brother of around 400 Million Muslims.⁷¹

Sayyal's being prevented from lecturing in Woking had probably come about over the differences between the two missionaries on Ahmad's role in the conversion of British Muslims to Islam. Kamal-ud-Din considered that the first priority was to introduce the British to Islam by transforming the religion's image and ultimately converting them. He had maintained the written oath of allegiance for new converts but adapted it so that there was no mention of allegiance to the Ahmadiyya leadership. Kamal-ud-Din believed that he was in agreement with Noor-ud-Din on this matter.

Yet Sayyal disagreed, and it may well be that his instructions on arrival in London were different. In the late summer of 1914, *Al-Fazl* comments that Sayyal delivered a lecture in Hyde Park, London, in which he used Ahmad's proofs to present the Ahmadiyya version of Jesus's life and death. The paper goes on to report:

Indian students at Cambridge University have invited him [Sayyal] to give a lecture. Those people who think that mentioning the Promised Messiah in England will hold back propagation, are themselves holding back the progress

of Ahmadiyya in the UK. Some people of the Ahmadiyya fiqh consider that the teachings are unnecessary for propagation.⁷²

Sayyal delivered his own comments on the situation when he returned to Qadian in early 1916.

Initially I was told to work with Khwaja Sahib, I was ready to take on every kind of struggle, but there was a clear struggle over the method of preaching that I had no cure for. They considered using the name of the Promised Messiah in preaching was forbidden. They feared being mocked. I considered it essential ... I could not resolve the issue of not preaching concerning the Promised Messiah.⁷³

On another occasion, Sayyal commented that he had no differences with Kamal-ud-Din's method of promoting Islam in the West other than the content of the preaching, presumably referring to the mention of Ahmad.⁷⁴ It would also appear that new missionaries from Qadian had misgivings with the liberality of the Islam practised by some converts at Woking. A letter from Qazi Abdullah, who replaced Sayyal after his departure back to India, notes:

A lady from Woking writes to me 'it has become apparent that there are things that are wrong in Woking'. A photograph of a female convert in *Islamic Review* in March has upset her because she does not conform to Islamic dress, but rather to latest Western fashions.⁷⁵

The issue of dress had also arisen between Sayyal and Kamal-ud-Din. The latter had advised the younger missionary to give up his turban and wear a British-style hat. Sayyal had objected on the grounds that Muslim-style dress was a significant identity marker of Islam and should be maintained in Britain, at least among the Indian missionaries.⁷⁶

By the summer of 1915, the split was irreconcilable. Maulana Muhammad Ali and Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din opposed the succession of the second caliph and formed what became known as the Lahori Ahmadiyya movement. In Britain, Kamal-ud-Din continued to work under the umbrella of the WMM, using the mosque as the centre of activities and publishing *The Islamic Review*, often with articles from British converts. Sayyal had left Woking to reside in London and initiated the London Muslim Mission (LMM), relying upon Qadian-produced literature to promote the message in Britain.

Another unexpected challenge for the missionaries and the converts in Britain came on 4 August 1914, when Britain joined the conflict in Europe and World War I began in earnest. It would impact the missionary effort in a number

of ways. The news of the war would dominate the content of the media, making it difficult to obtain coverage of the missionary's activities. In September 1914, *Al-Fazl* published an update from Sayyal, stating: 'People have nothing on their minds except for the war. I am meeting with newspaper editor but due to war there is no room for any other articles'.⁷⁷ Another letter complained, 'No-one thinks of anything but the war. I wrote to the *Woking Herald* but the editor declared he would publish it only when the war news calmed down'.⁷⁸

Travel was also proving difficult. Kamal-ud-Din had to delay a trip to India,⁷⁹ but new missionaries were sent out during the war years. One of the two biographies of Mufti Muhammad Sadiq contains accounts of his journey to the United Kingdom in 1917 and displays the missionary's zeal and commitment. Muhammad Sadiq departed Bombay on 22 March 1917 aboard the SS *Sardinia*. During his stay on the ship, he had conversations with passengers concerning Islam. On the fourth day, an Englishman accepted Islam aboard the ship and was renamed Dawud. Mufti Sadiq commented, 'If you have certainty in the faith then it is not difficult to talk to Europeans'.⁸⁰ He also reports that four people accepted Ahmadiyyat in Aden when the ship docked.⁸¹ The biography states that emergency procedures were undertaken on entry to the Mediterranean because of the proximity of the German navy. Mufti Sadiq went to his cabin to pray. He states that an angel appeared in his room affirming that the ship would reach its destination safely. He informed the captain and the passengers that their ship was safe.⁸² The passage not only reveals the missionary mindset, but also records the real dangers of travelling during the war.

Sayyal had to postpone a request from the second caliph asking him to visit Liverpool to see what activity was taking place since the departure of Abdullah Quilliam, as travel in Britain was becoming difficult due to troop movements.⁸³ The task would be completed successfully by the Woking missionary Sadr-al-Din after his arrival in London in 1914.⁸⁴ The war would also disrupt the post, a service used extensively by the missionaries, not only to keep contact with India, but also as a means of proselytising.⁸⁵ This was particularly an issue for Sayyal, as he relied on the English-language *Review of Religions* that was printed in Qadian.⁸⁶

Sayyal was to report to Qadian that he was 'Writing letters to acquaintances, meeting people, but due to the war there is a slow-down in our activity, a lot depends on victory or defeat in this war'. Sayyal appears to be aware of the significant impact of the war's outcomes on a geopolitical level, but the changing realities of global politics would have far-reaching consequences for Muslims in Britain and their allegiances. In November 1914, the Ottoman Empire entered

the war on the side of Germany, a decision that would hasten its eventual demise. Abdullah Quilliam's loyalty had been with the Ottomans, and many of the early converts agreed with his position, or at least first contacted Muslim culture and religious life in places under Ottoman sovereignty. Indian Muslims had different priorities, especially those arising from the place of Islam in India or the issue of Indian independence. Until the advent of the Khilafat movement in India,⁸⁷ their concerns were not with the Ottoman caliphate. Yet the Khilafat movement (1919–1922) arose as a pan-Islamic political protest campaign launched by Muslims in British India to influence the British government with regard to the protection of the Ottoman caliphate after the defeat of Turkey in World War I. In 1920, a delegation was sent to England under the leadership of Maulana Mohammad Ali Johar (1878–1931) to see the British prime minister, cabinet members and members of Parliament to explain the Indian point of view regarding the Khilafat (caliphate). The issue of Ottoman loyalty would divide some of the prominent converts,⁸⁸ and the creation of the Anglo-Ottoman Society (AOS) in January 1914 with Quilliam/de Léon as vice president and Marmaduke Pickthall as president would cause serious reservations about the allegiance of British Muslims among the authorities.

The establishment of the Ahmadiyya caliphate on the death of Ahmad might have been problematic for Quilliam and others who remained loyal to an Ottoman caliphate, but Kamal-ud-Din's playing down of the Ahmadiyya beliefs, subsumed into his desire to only promote Islam in the West, would have enabled Quilliam and others to work with the Woking missionaries. However, Sayyal's approach could have caused some problems for supporters of the Ottoman caliphate. In March 1924, the second caliph, Bashir-ud-Din, spoke in Qadian on the official abolishment of the Turkish caliphate in 1922 and declared categorically that God had established a new caliphate for all Muslims in the Ahmadiyya movement.⁸⁹ Kamal-ud-Din's position permitted him to maintain open lines with prominent converts such as Quilliam, and at the meeting organized in Woking in 1920 to host Mohammed Ali Johar, Quilliam/de Léon was invited to preside.⁹⁰

In spite of all these difficulties, the early converts appeared to remain in contact with both Kamal-ud-Din and Sayyal. The latter was convinced that the Ahmadiyya doctrines could be told up openly without damaging credibility with Muslims in Britain or the ability to attract converts. In an age when Theosophy and other esoteric movements were flourishing as alternatives to Christianity, the claim of a new universal messiah rising out the Abrahamic religions, along with the narrative of Jesus's tomb in Kashmir, would have had

its own attractions. In addition, many of the converts embraced Quilliam's version of pan-Islamism, insisting that there were little or no significant differences between the various strands of Islam, and Muslims must, at all cost, avoid the sectarianism that marked Christianity. The division between the missionaries from India would have been felt and disappointment would have been manifest, but the divisions would have been played down by the converts and foreign Muslims in Britain. As a small minority already under considerable pressure as a result of the war and earlier Islamophobic prejudices that were now inflamed by xenophobia and patriotism, they had to stay together at all costs.

Sayyal was aware of the dangers inherent in the schism and wrote back to Qadian, indicating that all was well with the relationships with the existing converts and Indian Muslim students in London. On two occasions, Qadian reported that Khalid Sheldrake considered Sayyal to be doing 'a wonderful job'.⁹¹ In October 1915, the new missionary sent from Qadian, Qazi Muhammad Abdullah, would deliver lectures to the International Society of Philology at its premises in Bloomsbury on the topic of 'early Muslim missionaries' and 'the life of the prophet'. The society's president was Quilliam/de Léon and it hosted both sets of Indian missionaries on numerous occasions, even though Gilham states that, by 1915, Quilliam was withdrawing himself from Woking, except for the annual celebration of festivals. Gilham speculates that he was uneasy with the Indian leadership and the Ahmadiyya connections, but he may have pulled back from active involvement in Islamic and Muslim causes during the war in an attempt to demonstrate his loyalty to the crown.⁹² After the war, his contacts with the newly formed London Ahmadiyya Mission were numerous. His name appeared on every guest list for lectures delivered by missionaries and celebrations of Islamic festivals, and he offered lectures himself at events organized by the London Mission, even socializing with the missionaries, including some in attendance when the caliph visited London in 1924.⁹³ It is possible that Quilliam/de Léon was more at ease with the Hanafi orthodoxy displayed by the new incoming missionaries than the more eclectic orientalism permitted at Woking.

In March 1920, Nayyar notes that Henri de Léon, Khalid Sheldrake and Lord Headley had benefitted from 'the table of the Ahmadiyya' in the previous two weeks. He notes that all three believed that the movement was the 'hope of Islam' but points out that they had not joined.⁹⁴ Significantly, Sayyal reports, after an Arab Muslim in London expressed interest in the life of Ahmad:

This refutes Kamal-ud-Din's view that the Promised Messiah and the concept of revelation cannot be preached in England. It is also Kamal-ud-Din's view

that the existing Indian Muslims in London would become angry, but all have understood why there is dispute between myself and Kamal-ud-din and internal disputes within our community. Despite all this Indian students have a good relationship with me and ready to offer help. Most will praise the Promised Messiah.⁹⁵

The WMM would continue to develop throughout the war years and after as the main vehicle for bringing together foreign Muslims in Britain and British converts, working together with the BMS and the AOS, and under the capable leadership of Kamal-ud-Din until his death in 1932. Until the 1950s it remained one of the main vehicles for conversion to Islam, and *The Islamic Review* maintained individual records of conversion, as did the English-language version of *The Review of Religions*. Although most commentators suggest that the WMM was more successful at conversion, those loyal to Qadian were able to consistently pick up converts through to the same period. Gilham notes that the WMM database gives information on 483 converts over the forty-year period from 1913–1953, of which 260 were men and 220 women.⁹⁶ He considers this to be an underestimate and believes the figure to be closer to 2,000.⁹⁷ The LMM is more difficult to calculate, but *The Daily Herald* suggests between 200 and 300 in the late 1930s.⁹⁸ Notably, the WMM's successes were predominantly of middle-class and high-class status, and they were able to follow the conversion of Lord Headley with a number of other high-profile figures, such as Marmaduke Pickthall (1917), Sir Charles Edward Abdullah Archibald (1923), Sir Oman Hubert Rankin (1927) and Sir Thomas Lauder-Brunton (1931).⁹⁹

Woking would also continue to be a hub for Indian Muslims, especially as Kamal-ud-Din was careful not to engage in sectarian issues, aware of the dangers already inherent in the split with Qadian. Conscious of the British Muslim unease with sectarianism, he always circulated the imam in Woking to demonstrate his ecumenism.¹⁰⁰ Most Indians in Britain lived in London, however, and they would seek local venues to meet with each other. The Al-Fazl London mosque, opened in 1926, would become an important meeting place for Anglo-Indian politics to be discussed by Indian Muslim leaders residing in the city.

In this chapter we have outlined the success of Kamal-ud-Din and the WMM, focusing on its ability to engage with existing converts and bring about the conversion of new figures to become the next generation of leadership among British Muslims. The emphasis has been on the pan-Islamism promoted by the Ahmadiyya at Woking and the attempt to establish a form of Islam that was

acceptable to upper-class converts and Western-educated Indians in London. We have also tried to demonstrate that, in spite of tensions caused by the differences between Kamal-ud-Din and Sayyal, most converts and Indian Muslims in London tried to stay out of the sectarian conflict engendered by the division. The following chapter will explore the efforts of the Ahmadiyya in London after the break with Woking.

Islamic Mission to Britain: London

This chapter will explore the development of the Ahmadiyya Mission in London from the point of Sayyal's departure from Woking to the caliph's visit in 1924. It will be seen that the missionaries loyal to the caliphate in Qadian would refocus their attention on overtly promoting the teachings and messiahship of Ahmad, with an emphasis on orthodox Islamic practice. There was no challenge to the status of the prophethood of Muhammad and the supremacy of the Qur'an. Their new emphases were on the dispensation regarding *jihad*, the unique interpretation of the 'seal of the prophets' and the very different version of Jesus's life and death. To further these aims, the missionaries sought a location for a mosque in London. After the division with Woking, they relocated near Marble Arch and began to disseminate their message in London and the South Coast, especially the towns of Folkestone and Portsmouth. They would remain acutely aware that there was no spiritual heart to locate their activities geographically without a mosque. Sayyal continued to develop the Ahmadiyya Mission in London, but underlying his activities remained the desire to find a plot of land where a mosque could be constructed.

Sayyal and the new missionaries from Qadian tended to preach a more orthodox position when it came to adapting to English cultural norms. Otherwise, there was little to distinguish Sayyal's method of transmitting the message from that of the Woking missionaries. Gilham notes that Kamal-ud-Din had communicated to Western audiences through the means of lectures in Hyde Park, especially Speaker's Corner, public speaking in libraries, advertisements in newspapers, interviews with the press, letter writing and invitations sought from various esoteric movements and religious groups outside the mainstream churches, such as Theosophists, Masons, Christian Scientists, Spiritualists and Unitarians.¹ The lectures he delivered would attempt to reposition Islam as a simple, uncluttered, rational monotheism capable of creating ethical civilizations of the highest order, empathetic to the ideals of Western civilization. In

addition, the version of Islam promoted by Kamal-ud-Din stressed class equality and was free from 'churchianity', as opposed to Christianity. This was a message that could resonate with Christians or agnostics already drawn to the fringes.

Sayyal saw no reason to change the formula. His letters to India show the everyday activities of the missionaries in London. Although Sayyal and Kamal-ud-Din disagreed with each other, both missionaries followed a methodology of mission elaborated by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and believed to be a prophetic model. The Ahmadiyya founder had proposed that the Islamic mission should engage in five activities or methods: writing books, holding meetings and giving lectures, creating and distributing pamphlets and leaflets, holding conversations, engaging in correspondence with interested people and declaring *bai'at*.²

On 20 September 1914, Sayyal reported that he had written an article for *The Light*, and commented that it was a way of reaching thousands of people.³ On 22 September, a report came from Qadian saying that Sayyal was trying to rationalize his approach to London's libraries, providing them all with a leaflet that gave the titles of his lectures.⁴ In October, Sayyal wrote up most of his lectures so that they could be distributed as pamphlets and leaflets.⁵ Throughout the summer of 1914 and into 1915, He gave lectures to the Theosophical Society, the International Society, the Higher Thought Circle, Fulham and Harrogate public libraries, and at various locations in Southsea and Folkestone. Sayyal began to venture farther afield, visiting Birmingham and Scotland in 1915. Some of the lecture topics were 'The Life of Muhammad', 'Revelation and Divine Discourse', 'Islam', 'Quranic Method of Worship', 'Initial Warfare in Islam', 'Jesus and the Qur'an', 'The Beauties of the Qur'an', 'Islam and the Modern World' and 'The True Spirit of Islam'. The titles would suggest that Sayyal continued to draw upon Kamal-ud-Din's strategy of promoting, informing or transforming the image of Islam. The titles are not uncontroversial for other Muslims in Britain, and indeed, on 14 October 1914, *Al-Fazl* reported that Lord Headley and other prominent converts attended a lecture on 'Initial warfare in Islam' at Fulham Library.⁶ The lecture titles and the continuing attendance of British converts at Sayyal's lectures would suggest that the London missionaries sought to present Ahmadiyya as 'true Islam', avoiding the more problematic issues of Ahmad's prophethood and messiahship.⁷ However, the reality of the letters back to India suggests something very different was happening. Increasingly, Sayyal would test the waters, promoting the particular Ahmadiyya version of Islam. As this was perceived to be met with success, the missionaries arriving from Qadian would become more open to promoting Ahmadiyya not only as a reform movement within the Islamic *ummah*, but as the only true form of the religion. This

would appear to be contrary to Gilham's understanding that the missionaries from Qadian quietened the rhetoric after a time and delivered a message that was more in line with Woking.⁸

Sayyal did refute suggestions that he had been converting Indian and Turkish Muslims residing in the city to Ahmadiyya, a criticism apparently being voiced in some quarters. He also mentioned that there had been fears among the missionaries that the message of Ahmad's divine status and receipt of revelation would be greeted with ridicule.⁹ Earlier letters suggest that these doubts had been overcome. Qazi Abdullah would write to India requesting materials that described the tomb of Jesus in Kashmir and Ahmad's version of the death of Jesus. He affirmed that Violet Salima Croxford would take care of translation and distribution.¹⁰ In September 1914, he observed that there was a great need for books in English, as it was not sufficient to merely exchange letters with people, and noted that the British preferred reading books to preaching.¹¹ He also commented that there was a need to introduce the Promised Messiah's life and teachings to people and that early editions of *The Review of Religions* would make life much easier for the missionaries.¹²

The above would suggest that the Qadian missionaries were cautious about presenting Ahmad's more controversial teachings. The turning point seems to be the conversion of Mr Corio, a man of Italian extraction described as a political activist.¹³ Corio is claimed as the first Ahmadi convert, and from this point onward the Ahmadiyya missionaries would distinguish between new Muslims and Ahmadis. Gaining the first follower to openly confess his allegiance to Ahmad appeared to convince the fledgling community that it was possible to be more explicit. The news arrived in Qadian in time to be announced at the annual convention (*jalsa*),¹⁴ and when Sayyal returned to Qadian in the spring of 1916, he reported that 'there was a clear struggle over the method of preaching that I had no cure for. They considered [Woking] using the name of the Promised Messiah in preaching was forbidden. They feared being mocked. I considered it essential'.¹⁵ He refers to one lecture in particular that assured him he was correct. The topic was revelation and divine discourse, and it was mocked by an atheist who came to believe in God. Sayyal described the person as being 'a sincere and devout Ahmadi and passionate missionary'.¹⁶

The letters to Qadian indicate the challenges facing the missionaries, but primarily their newfound confidence to preach an undiluted Ahmadiyya message. With this goal in mind, they bemoaned their lack of written materials to convey such a message. The war years had led to difficulties in bringing such materials from India, and in both London and Woking, literature that they recognized

as essential was lacking. Zafrullah Khan complained of the paucity of Islamic literature in English and, in particular, the lack of an English translation of the Qur'an written by a Muslim. He calls for an 'authentic' version written by an Ahmadiyya.¹⁷ Sayyal observed in 1914 that he was receiving increasing requests for *The Review of Religions*, and that the missionaries were able to draw upon Ahmad's book, which had been published in London. He mentioned that people were requesting the prophecies of Ahmad and that many questions in the lectures were for more information on the founder.¹⁸ By the end of April 1915, Sayyal was able to state confidently, 'I mention the teachings of the Promised Messiah wherever I go'.¹⁹

The schism in the movement could be understood as a move towards a more orthodox Sunni position (Lahoris at Woking) and the Qadian heresy (London missionaries), but it was never that transparent to the British converts, or even Indian Muslim students or Sunni and Shi'a dignitaries in London. Senior converts such as Quilliam/Henri de Léon and Khalid Sheldrake were frequent visitors to the London missionaries in their new base at 4 Star Street near Edgware Road. Their public lectures were attended by Muslims of all religious persuasions in London. In 1914, Sayyal reported that several of his lectures had been attended by Lord Headley.²⁰ This has to be understood in context. The communities of Muslims in London were small, spiritual inspiration was relatively rare, and Kamal-ud-Din and Sayyal were regarded as excellent speakers. Gilham states that the WMM was far more successful in converting the British to Islam, and observes that the LMM 'consistently struggled to secure new converts in Britain'.²¹ He puts the reasons down to weaker organization, the lack of convert leadership, central control in the hands of foreign missionaries who were far too reliant on the leadership in Qadian, and a 'dubious cultish status'.²² Allocation of loyalty definitively to one movement or the other was not always so straightforward. Gilham acknowledges that there are problems in counting numbers from those loyal to either movement and that contemporary sources appear to conflict dramatically. *The Daily Herald* reports that between 200 and 300 converts had been gained by the London missionaries up until the 1930s, and even by the late 1950s the newly arrived missionary from Qadian could only report 149 members of the movement in London, most of whom were 'immigrants and students'.²³ By the 1950s, both Woking and London would appear to be in decline from their heyday in the late 1920s.

Both movements would record conversions in their respective media, but one key difference is that the Qadian missionaries appeared to view London as the central location to establish their mission globally, not only as a place to

convert the British to Islam. Their lists of 'foreign' conversions in London were just as likely to include Africans staying in the city.²⁴ The missionaries themselves reported that they were happy with their progress, but the emphasis is on the quality of the converts rather than numbers. Nayyar mentioned that he had not listed numbers of converts for some time, as the caliph commented that it was the quality of conversion that counted.²⁵ The actual situation would appear to be fluid, with a core membership loyal to each set of missionaries and the majority of Muslims in the capital drawing upon the resources that were offered in both locations.

The new address in central London, although not the desired mosque, provided a focus for activities, and on 29 October 1915, *Al-Fazl* announced that five men and six women had accepted Islam in London and the south of England over the previous fifteen days. The article notes that in the month of August, the missionaries had delivered ten lectures, received 2,300 letters and posted out 300 replies. Twenty people had visited the new centre and many home visits had been conducted. One hundred tracts had been distributed.²⁶ The missionaries had expanded beyond London. Small communities had been established on the south coast of England in Southsea, Portsmouth and Folkestone. By June 1915, Sayyal had visited and lectured in eleven British cities, and he visited Scotland in November 1915.²⁷ Throughout 1914 and 1915, a small number of converts are mentioned in the letters back to Qadian as active proselytizers of Islam and Ahmadiyya. The letters mention the Jewish convert Muhammad Suleiman, the Italian journalist Mr Corio, Muhammad Younis Evans and Violet Salima Croxford, and Fatima Neffold and her daughter Khadija Neffold. These converts were busy distributing tracts and speaking to their acquaintances and families, and some were engaged in public lecturing. Sayyal affirms that the London Mission was taking shape as a proper movement,²⁸ and six months later he writes that when they worked as a community (*jamaat*), the efforts were more fruitful.²⁹ He notes that he was so busy, he employed a clerk to assist him with his work.³⁰

The reference to a *jamaat* probably refers to the arrival of new missionaries from India to work alongside the converts. In 1915, Sayyal and some converts made requests to Qadian for more missionaries.³¹ The first to arrive was Qazi Muhammad Abdullah, on 16 October 1915, who immediately accompanied Sayyal to Scotland. On 10 March 1917, Mufti Muhammad Sadiq departed Qadian for England, where he would pass two and a half years before embarking for the United States.³² The missionaries would return to Qadian from time to time. Sayyal went back in 1916, and Qazi Muhammad Abdullah in 1919. In 1919

Sayyal went back to London, where he remained until 1921, to be replaced by Mubarrak Ali, a Bengali missionary, who remained until 1923. Abdur Rahim Nayyar arrived in 1923 and departed in 1924, replaced by Abdur Rahim Dard, who stayed until 1928. Dard would be the first imam of the London mosque and would return for a second spell from 1934 to 1938. The second imam of the mosque, Farzand Ali, stayed from 1928 to 1934. With the exception of Muhammad Sadiq, all these men served a period as missionary in charge of the United Kingdom, and a pattern was established for two missionaries to be in London simultaneously, one gaining experience under the preceding missionary before taking charge, while the other returned to India.³³

The arrival of the new missionaries in 1916 and 1917 would generate new energy. Muhammad Saddiq's profile in the Ahmadiyya was highly esteemed. In 1900, at the age of eighteen, he had permanently moved to Qadian to commit



Figure 5 Portraits of the early missionaries sent from Qadian to London (1913–1930): (left to right) Fateh Muhammad Sayyal, Qazi Muhammad Abdullah, Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, Abd ur Raheem Nayyar, Mubarrak Ali, Maulana Abdur Rahim Dard. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

his life to the movement. As a close companion of Ahmad, he had participated in a number of activities famed in the movement, including challenging Bishop George Alfred Lefroy in May 1900. His letters to famous personalities abroad were renowned, and the recipients included James L. Rogers of California, George Baker of Philadelphia, Alexander Webb, Count Tolstoy and Reverend Piggot of London.³⁴ His profile matched that of Kamal ud-Din and would have provided a psychological boost to overcome the apparent betrayal of the Woking missionary. On 29 December 1919, shortly before Saddiq's departure to the United States, a letter from Sayyal was read out at the annual *Jhalsa* in Qadian by the second caliph. It stated:

The purpose in sending Saddiq alongside Qazi Abdullah has been achieved. Approximately one hundred new Muslims have entered the fold. Approximately fifty have become *musaddiqeen* (people of the Truth). In the heart of London Ahmadiyya has been established. Rulers of the land have been informed and we have preached to the poorer people. Thousands of tracts have been distributed, opponents have been challenged in debates. Lectures have taken place in the suburbs. The work took place in spite of the days of war and its difficulties. Very few men were visible and women were working in transport, food was difficult to obtain, but our mission was successful.³⁵

According to the letter, Mufti Saddiq failed only two tasks that he set himself: publishing a regular monthly magazine and establishing a mosque in London. The letter requests that a mosque fund should be established and an architect found to draw up the designs.³⁶

The observation that 100 new conversions had taken place, of whom only half were 'people of the Truth' would suggest that not all new converts were required to become Ahmadiyya. The lectures delivered by the missionaries would appear to be differentiated. There were those who followed the same formula as Woking and could be categorized as educating interested audiences in London and elsewhere in Britain on Islam. They would introduce the religion as being in harmony with the spirit of the times, a reasonable, straightforward ethical monotheism uncluttered by obscure theology or belief in the miraculous. The understanding of Islam was that learned by the missionaries from the writings of Ahmad, and their lectures could be supported by articles in *The Review of Religions* or Ahmad's book *Teachings of Islam*. Other lectures were delivered on less religious themes, such as the history of the Arabs, and could attract a different cultural audience interested in the history of the Orient. The final category was more overtly Ahmadiyya in theme and introduced Ahmad's

prophetic claims and his role as the 'Promised Messiah'. For the cognoscenti, Islam, too, had lost its way but had been renewed by Ahmad, a prophet and messiah expected by all the world's religions.

One particular form of proselytizing deserves mention not only for its success, but for its unique British character. Hyde Park Corner, or Speaker's Corner, as it was known, had become virtually a byword for all that was democratic and fair-minded in Britain. Speakers from all political and religious persuasions would stand and speak their views, often critical of the establishment. Crowds would gather in relatively large numbers on Sundays to listen, and also to heckle. Sayyal had been introduced to the practice by Kamal-ud-Din on his arrival in London, and all the Ahmadiyya Indian missionaries and active converts would deliver lectures there while volunteers distributed leaflets. The new London Mission was at nearby Marble Arch, and not only could the missionaries walk across to Speaker's Corner easily, but the close proximity of the mission house enabled them to invite interested people back to discover more and sometimes eat with them. It became a regular feature of London Mission activities, suspended in winter but increasing when the summer months arrived. Even as early September 1914, Sayyal reported the great success of the Hyde Park lectures, and it is clear from the contents of his letter that he was not only comparing the respective merits of Islamic unity (*tawhid*) over Trinitarian doctrines, but also putting forward Ahmad's proofs that Jesus was not crucified.³⁷ By 1920, the missionaries increased the Hyde Park open-air sessions to four times a week in the summer months,³⁸ and their letters reveal that they had learned something of the theatrical nature of the occasion. They reported that the Christian missionaries often heckled them, shouting, 'Come to Christ! Come to Christ!' The Ahmadiyya would return their cries with 'Come to Ahmad! Come to Ahmad!'³⁹ On one occasion in May 1920, Nayyar reported that some Christians had come to heckle but were prevented by the public. A Roman Catholic priest constantly interrupted the missionaries, but the crowd turned on him, shouting, 'Quiet, we want to hear', 'Stop talking gibberish'. A woman stole his hat and threw it into the crowd, a boy threw away his umbrella and a man walked the priest outside the circle for his safety.⁴⁰ Nayyar explains that 'unaffiliated' Christians were more at ease with Islamic monotheism and more sympathetic to the Muslim missionaries than they were to Christian speakers, and that the Ahmadiyya events drew large crowds and a host of questions. Some even converted in the park.⁴¹ Qazi Abdullah would attract the attention of people by loudly reciting the *kalimah* before beginning to speak.⁴² By the summer of 1920, the missionaries had

developed the Hyde Park lectures into an established format. Qazi Abdullah painted a wooden board proclaiming:

The Ahmadi Movement. Blessed is Allah the Lord of the Universe, who has raised the Prophet Ahmed in the east as foretold at the crying need of humanity, blessed are those who accept the truth. Enquiries invited 4 Star Street, Edgware Road, London.

Recitations of the Qur'an were also used to attract attention. Nayyar reported that sometimes discussions could go on for hours, and members of the public would ask for literature on Islam and the Ahmadiyya movement.⁴³ The missionary notes that during rain showers, speeches in Hyde Park took place under umbrellas, and he comments that the Ahmadiyya speakers had initially stopped preaching when it rained, until they realized that the British were undeterred by the weather. He also comments on British politeness and fair play, observing that people took off their hats when they thanked the missionaries.⁴⁴ Qazi Abdullah, in particular, seemed to have embraced the mood of Speaker's Corner. Within weeks of his arrival, he was distributing leaflets, announcing that 'the imam of the time has arrived'. He wore a large green turban and once, on observing a Jewish crowd around a rabbi, switched to Hebrew, to their amazement. On one occasion, he issued an invitation to the centre to an eight-foot man who had gathered a crowd around him, fascinated by his height.⁴⁵ The first conversion in the park came as a result of a meeting with Qazi Abdullah, of a man whose name was apparently 'Sparrow'.⁴⁶

The main locations for lectures, other than public libraries, were the various lodges of the Theosophical Society, Spiritualist churches, the Universal church, the Higher Thought Circle, the International Society and the Society for East West Unity. These locations were populated by middle-class truth-seekers often disenchanted with Christianity, with an affinity for Eastern religions and an interest in esotericism and occultism. Spiritual healing, psychic phenomena and spiritualism were combined with Hindu teachings on reincarnation, the theory of karma and a general but not very informed view that Eastern religions were superior to Western materialism and Christian dogma. In such locations there was a relatively high number of men and, to a lesser degree, women who had travelled in the Muslim world or India, or had served in the military or as administrative functionaries in the empire. These places formed a pool of interested people for the missionaries of both Woking and London. Quilliam had already tapped this vein of potential converts in Liverpool, and his Societe Internationale de Philologie, Sciences et Beaux-Arts in Central London, known

as the College of Philology to the missionaries, would attract a similar audience. The college was a regular place for the missionaries to speak. Nayyar had written articles for *The Philomath*, the journal for the organization,⁴⁷ and at least one of the missionaries had been granted an honorary degree by the college.⁴⁸ Mufti Sadiq mentions his visits there as an example of the propagation of Islam in London. He informs India that

there is an education society in London whose secretary is Dr. Leon (MA) who is a new Muslim. After an invitation from a friend I have become a member of this society. There is a lecture every week. Dr. Leon is a very capable man. At this time, the annual convention is being held with lectures on art, science and languages. In one gathering I gave a speech in Urdu translated into English.⁴⁹

Quilliam/de Léon was part of this occult milieu. He was an influential member of various esoteric Freemasonry movements that emphasized their sympathies with non-Christian religious traditions, particularly Hinduism and Islam.⁵⁰ Patrick Bowen claims that 'most, if not all, of the prominent Western promoters of Islam and Sufism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries possessed connections with the European esoteric-Masonic community'. He argues that they were part of a 'mildly cohesive, historical force' that was transforming Western spirituality.⁵¹

Bowen's identification of Quilliam and others who embraced Islam (or Hinduism) with this changing religiosity linked to esotericism and occultism facilitates an understanding of the personal spiritual journeys of the converts and clarifies the attraction of the missionaries to such venues, but it also provides a way to differentiate the varying successes of the two groups of Ahmadiyya missionaries in Woking and London.

Both Quilliam in Liverpool and Kamal-ud-Din in Woking were free from any other authority to develop a very liberal version of Islam, where dress codes were lax, the concerns over *fiqh* prominent among the *ulama* of India and elsewhere in the Muslim world were nonexistent, drinking of alcohol was tolerated (at least in Lord Headley's case), food rules were lax and sometimes even *salat* was not observed. Bowen's identification of liberal or nonconformist tendencies among the converts would chime with this scenario. Quilliam was more orthodox in practice than some of the members of the Woking community, but he was still free from any other authority in his negotiation of Islamic norms and early twentieth-century British life. This was not the case with the London missionaries who arrived from Qadian. They were under the authority of a caliph whose followers among Indian Hanafi Muslims were increasing significantly, and there

was pressure to introduce conservative or traditional practices deemed normative in India. For the first time in the history of Islam in Britain, a major missionary movement was controlled by a leadership whose authority was located in India.

The irony of this situation is that Woking advertised itself among Muslims as normative and was prepared to reject the prophetic role of Ahmad, promoting him instead as a reformer (*mujaddid*), a position that could be accepted by most Muslims in Britain. Yet Woking would be at the forefront of developing a liberal interpretation of Islam's practices conducive to British life. This more laissez-faire approach would have been more congenial to the esoteric, occultist or romantic orientalist seekers among the interested and would go so far as to explain Woking's ability to attract more converts than the London missionaries. But this may not be the whole picture, for it is possible that the appeal of a world messiah may have attracted these esoteric seekers to the London Mission.

It is possible to see these tensions played out among the missionaries and the converts. In the early summer of 1920, Nayyar complained that most people in London considered Christianity to be only a few basic moral principles and therefore expected to practice Islam in the same way. He said that it was difficult to make them comprehend that Islam was a complete way of life and required total transformation.⁵² The issue of total emergence into an Islamic way of life that was bothering Nayyal would correspond with the respective interpretations of Islam in the two mission centres. Even in 1914, Sayyal wrote that he had received correspondence from Maude Ettridge, who had converted to Islam in Woking, requesting to be taught prayers in Arabic, as she only knew how to conduct *salat* in English.⁵³ A decade later, during the second caliph's visit to London, one of his companions, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, refused to shake hands with a woman and caused offense. Although her female associates eventually came to respect his religious sensitivities, some British women held a meeting with the caliph to complain.⁵⁴ These issues of gender separation (*purdah*) were particularly sensitive in an age when the suffragette movement was at its height. Woking, on the other hand, did not practice strict purdah and allowed men and women to pray together. Qazi Abdullah recounts an incident of a female convert who had complained of a photograph in *The Islamic Review* published in March 1916. The offending photograph was of another female convert, whose dress clearly did not conform to Islamic standards but was in the 'latest Western fashions'. He concludes that 'it has become apparent that there are things that are wrong in Woking'.⁵⁵ Nayyar was once asked if he would teach the women of Europe to practice *purdah* like his own wife. He

replied that 'the God of Europe' had instructed all women to do likewise in the Christian scriptures. He declared that he would preach *purdah*, but it was up to the women to obey.⁵⁶

In the summer of 1917, Sayyal commented that his more traditional Muslim garb was an advertisement for Islam. He disagreed with Kamal-ud-Din, who objected to his green turban, and also some young members of the movement, who had suggested a British hat. Sayyal argued that his turban was a symbol of Islam and had curiosity value to attract people to ask questions when they saw him walking in the park. He argued that 'if we leave this [Islamic dress] in this country than there nothing left that differentiates Islam'.⁵⁷ Mufti Sadiq reports in his autobiography that whenever Sayyal passed a church, he would recite the *kalimah* and pronounce the words 'may the name of God (Allah) be remembered here',⁵⁸ perhaps suggesting a more conservative framing of Islamic exclusivism.

The second caliph dispelled any notion of the esotericists' understanding of universalism. In a conversation with Lady Lytton, the president of the Theosophical Society, he informed her that Ahmad was the messiah expected by all the religions of the world, but to her question 'Was his religion universal?' he replied that 'there was no need to create a new religion. He called everyone towards Islam. The terminology universal religion is not right. Islam is a universal religion. Islam is for the whole world and he is calling towards that religion'.⁵⁹

This shift towards a Hanafi-influenced Islamic orthodoxy would require instruction for the converts. In 1920, the missionaries opened the Madrasa al-Sina Sharqiyya in London and advertised it in *The Times*,⁶⁰ and in 1926, after the mosque was opened, it was reported that the focus would now be on the education of new converts. Regular classes were commenced every weekend, where the doctrines of Islam – the five pillars – and the reciting of the Qur'an in Arabic were taught. One convert was praised for learning the *azan* and *takbir*.⁶¹

The issue of acceptance of the full Ahmadiyya version of prophethood and sworn allegiance to Ahmad and the subsequent caliphate was far more contentious, and certainly at odds with Woking. Converts from Woking seemed to be more at ease with going to public lectures delivered by London missionaries. The community of Muslim converts was small, and unity was placed as a high priority among them. Khalid Sheldrake's attitudes are illustrative. Sheldrake attended lectures and celebrated Islamic festivals with the London missionaries on a number of occasions and did not want to be drawn into sectarian divisions. After criticisms that he passed too much time with the London missionaries and attended meetings with the second caliph in 1924, he declared:

Did I accept the views of this or that party? No! I accepted Islam, and schools of thought mean but little to me. What I admire is sincerity! Shall I reject a man or party because their views on minor details differ from my own? Thus I repeat, all Muslims to me are brethren ... Muslims! Cease to quibble over this or that and unite in the service of Allah. This is the time for unity, not division.⁶²

Sheldrake's viewpoint may have influenced his relations with Woking, as in 1915 he was instructed to leave the WMM, even though he was readmitted fairly soon after.⁶³

Quilliam/de Léon was more complex. He seemed to be at ease with visiting the London Mission and participating in its activities,⁶⁴ but he took part in a debate there in which he defended Sunni orthodoxy on the seal of the prophets, arguing that Muhammad was final. His antagonist in the debate was Lord Headley, who argued that, since Muhammad had come after Jesus, why could Ahmad not follow Muhammad?⁶⁵ The debate appeared to be cordial. Quilliam/de Léon's more orthodox position on prophethood did not prevent him from contacting the London missionaries. Headley was an acolyte of Kamal-ud-Din but argued for the possibility of Ahmad's prophethood. Headley, Quilliam/de Léon and Sheldrake appeared to be more interested in Islamic unity in Britain than taking sectarian divisions too seriously. These highly respected converts had been drawn to Islam partly because they believed that it did not share the sectarian divides that had afflicted Christianity.

Lord Headley also preached on the absolute necessity of unity. In 1927, he spoke in Delhi, declaring:

I am absolutely at loss to understand the causes of the trouble brewing in our atmosphere on sectional grounds. And let me be frank to tell you one thing: Don't entertain any hope of success in the spread of Islam, especially in the West, if you carry to them with all such sectional spirit.⁶⁶

He went on to say that 'sectarianism is the chief trouble in Christendom; they are divided more or less in five hundred sects'. However, this did not stop the London Mission from complaining in 1920 that 'Our Woking friends are successful in one thing – keeping their new English converts from us – due to having a mosque, large kitchen and non-Ahmadi Indians with them, they are successful'.⁶⁷

There were two issues that would concern the Indian Muslims in Britain. Kamal-ud-Din had adopted a modified version of the *bai'at* devised by Ahmad. His version was only an acceptance of Islam and was kept on file in Woking. The London missionaries insisted upon the original *bai'at* and sent the completed forms back to Qadian as proof of allegiance to Ahmad's

prophethood. Nayyar wrote on this issue, 'We can say with certainty that no English Muslim is against us, there are English with them [in Woking] but they also come to see us. Ameer Ali and Aga Khan are opposed to the *Bai'at*'.⁶⁸ The issue of the Ahmadi *bai'at* was not as controversial as the second caliph's decision to declare that Muslims who did not accept the prophethood of Ahmad were outside the fold of Islam. A conversation with the caliph on his visit to London in 1924 reveals the disquiet of some of the converts. The caliph met with a group of converts, including Quilliam/de Léon. A woman named Mrs Pearl (Moti Begum), who attended both Woking and London groups, asked a number of questions. The first was clearly directed at Islamic sectarianism. She asked why the movement had its own name distinct from 'Islam'. The caliph replied that the community had its own name because some of its concepts were different, even though the core principles were identical. Mrs Pearl requested that the caliph visit her home, as she was his 'Islamic sister'. She then asked a crucial question: 'According to your point of view am I a Muslim?' The caliph's reply was contentious and difficult to accept for the small community of converts in Britain. He declared, 'Because you do not accept a prophet of God, we cannot call you a Muslim'. He agreed that she could define herself as a Muslim, but went on to explain that, according to the Qur'an, anyone who rejected a prophet of God could not be defined as a Muslim, as all prophets must be accepted and a Muslim should not distinguish between them. Mrs Pearl's final remark was, 'Tell me about Islam'. The caliph's reply was a statement to the effect that true Islam is only Ahmadiyyat, which 'a Prophet of God brought down to us'.⁶⁹

Such clear demarcation of what constituted true Islam would have been a major challenge for British Muslims between the two World Wars. To declare a Muslim of a rival movement to be outside the fold of Islam (*takfir*) was a common tactic among nineteenth-century Indian movements, but it was not part of British Muslim life. Kamal-ud-Din had frequently declared that Islam was free from sectarian divisions, but the spirit of exclusivity among the London missionaries and expressed during the caliph's visit seemed to jar with such ideals. In 1927, Headley addressed the issue head-on, arguing forcefully:

It strikes a blow at the solidarity of Islam which is to be greatly deplored. One cannot find fault with the Ahmadis for thinking anything that they like (it is a free country), but one may reasonably object to being excluded from the ranks of the faithful at the behest of a small number of zealous adherents of a certain idea.⁷⁰

It was precisely the 'zealous' nature of the Indian missionaries that had attracted the converts. Described by Sheldrake as 'sincerity', whatever the doctrinal differences, this piety of the missionaries was apparent to both converted and foreign Muslims.

In order to maintain the unity of Islam and friendship circles among both converted and Indian Muslims, it had always been necessary to be flexible. In London, among the Indian Muslims, Shi'as of all branches and Sunnis of all persuasions prayed side-by-side. The ideals of unity and tolerance were enshrined in acceptance of difference. Marmaduke Pickthall invoked the spirit of inquiry and free thought as characteristic of Islam, while Headley maintained that it was necessary to accommodate to English life, insisting that it would be 'injudicious in the extreme to lay down too many hard and fast rules at starting ... We want people to see for themselves the beauty and simplicity of Islam – matters of form and ceremony which are not of vital importance should be left for future consideration'.⁷¹ These discourses of unity and flexibility permitted the Woking and London Missions to survive and flourish, even though individual Muslims would express their various opinions on issues that displeased them. Any attempt to import the more doctrinaire debates that had acrimoniously divided Indian Muslims on sectarian grounds would have endangered this delicate unity essential in Britain.

Conversion would continue in London, but increasingly *Al-Fazl* records the details of African converts visiting or studying in London rather than English men and women. Gilham also claims that the numbers of English converts were not on par with Woking, and that the numbers recorded in *The Review of Religions* suggested that the missionaries were including all individuals converted in London as opposed to only English men and women.⁷² A good sample year to assess the activities of the London Mission would be 1920, when arguably it was somewhere near the peak of its activities. They had developed their methods of *tabligh*, with at least two missionaries at any one time operating in London, ably supported by a handful of 'honourary' missionaries from among the most zealous of the converts. They had lost their reticence to openly promote themselves as Ahmadiyya Muslims. The new location in Putney had begun to function, while Star Street remained operational in central London. The city itself was back to normal after the crises inflicted by the war.

The year 1920 opened with the experienced Sayyal as missionary in charge, halfway through his second term in London. He was ably assisted by Nayyar. Until March, the two missionaries would also have the inspiration of Mufti Saddiq before his departure to the United States. Nayyar had written to Qadian

in January that his heart was 'full of inspiration' as he collected 'the white birds of London'.⁷³ He states in another letter that he was 'preaching to the wealthy'.⁷⁴ These letters early in the year also show that the converts were taking up the challenge of preaching. Nayyar suggests that they were better able to speak to Christians, and he also mentions that the women missionaries from among the converts were active in teaching new women converts in the basics of practising Islam. The children were being taught to recite the Qur'an, with annual prizes awarded. The letters indicate that the meetings at the centre had taken on a regular pattern of lectures, prayers, recitation of the Qur'an with translation and the poetry of Ahmad. On Fridays, new Muslims testified to their faith and the missionaries focused on teaching the principles of Islam and the responsibility of the new Muslims to uphold Islam in the face of Western criticism.⁷⁵ Nayyar states that Islam was presented as a 'natural commonsense religion in line with innate spirituality of humanity'.⁷⁶ He also mentions that the London Mission had another location. The Jewish convert Suleiman Feit had converted his family members, and their house in the East End had become the third Ahmadi mission house in London.⁷⁷ The letters reveal that the kitchen was used as a *langar* (a place for communal eating for the public and the missionaries) and that there was regular organization of donations from among the converts. The number of Indian missionaries based in London now allowed for one missionary to be out on tour around Britain while the other stayed in the capital.⁷⁸

Nayyar reports that the year opened with fourteen new 'English' converts (twelve men and two women) over a two-week period in January.⁷⁹ Unfortunately, he does not provide any other information, although it might be safe to assume that they included the six new Muslims reported the week before (two men, one woman and three children, two boys and a girl), which would suggest a family unit.⁸⁰ Nayyar's claim to be preaching to the wealthy possibly refers to letters sent out to all the royal families of Europe.⁸¹ A small number of English middle-class converts are mentioned. The Jewish family consisting of Suleiman Feit and his brothers manufactured and sold bicycles. One more brother, Isaac Feit, owned a business in Birmingham. In April, Hubert William Abbott (Nasruddin) converted and was described as a fellow of the Southsea Theosophical Society.⁸² In the summer of 1920, James William Leader, an army captain who had studied at Cambridge, had lectured on Christianity in Jerusalem and was regarded as 'a minister by a number of Christian denominations',⁸³ converted.⁸⁴ In the same period, two English women, Miss Victoria Naughton⁸⁵ and Mrs Vernon, the latter described as a 'very spiritual lady', joined the movement.⁸⁶ It is unlikely that these were the only English converts, but Nayyar generally provides only



Figure 6 Eid ul-Fitr gathering in London circa 1920. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

numbers in his records of conversion, for example, four in March, six in April, five in September and three in October.⁸⁷ One entry made in late 1920 reveals the eclectic nature of British conversion. In an account of six new Muslims, Nayyar provides some information: Ayesha is the wife of a French count and Roman Catholic; Salaam (a female convert) wants to learn Islam and become a preacher; Abdur Raheem is an old pensioner from Portsmouth; Mary (Safia) is the wife of an Arab in Cardiff; Rabia Rose Vernon, mentioned above, is described as an elderly lady, very mystic, who studies books all day; and finally, the son of Rabia Rose Vernon, who is said to be, like his mother, seeking spiritual knowledge.⁸⁸

All the other conversions that took place in London were not of British people. In March, two Bengalis accepted Ahmadiyyat⁸⁹; in April, an American man and a Dutch man accepted Islam. The American was described as Hubert Marvelli Sharif, a resident of the West Indies and president of the United African Brotherhood. The Dutch man was named Mahmood and was the first recorded Ahmadi from Holland.⁹⁰ A Canadian woman accepted Islam after meeting Mufti Sadiq in a hotel in Liverpool,⁹¹ along with a German woman from Berlin, who had moved to London to work in a bank⁹²; in May, a Norwegian woman accepted Ahmadiyyat and moved to Star Street to study with the missionaries⁹³; in May and June, there were a Hindu graduate (Mr Krishna), a Bosnian physician

and a Portuguese man⁹⁴; and in September, a French countess. In addition to these foreign nationals was a growing group of black converts from Christianity, from either the West Indies or West Africa. The main source for these black converts appears to have been Mr Browne, secretary of the United African Brotherhood, who converted in March.⁹⁵ In April, there were new Muslims from Nigeria, followed by another three of unknown nationality, described as being sent by Mr Browne in May.⁹⁶ In June, Dr Levick Farooq from Trinidad accepted Ahmadiyyat.⁹⁷ In the same month, Nayyar reports that a new convert named Augustus, from Lagos and studying law in London, and thus the first Muslim barrister in Nigeria, would be an Ahmadi.⁹⁸ At the end of May, four Trinidadian Christians were recorded, along with another Nigerian in July.⁹⁹

Although the numbers of converts reported are not large, they help to illuminate a number of features of the Ahmadiyya Mission. The conversion accounts would bear out Gilham's analysis, but a positive light can be shone on the diversity of the converts' backgrounds. The shift of operations to London as opposed to Woking brought the missionaries into contact with a cosmopolitan population. This diversity would enable contacts to be made in other places, Nigeria and Bosnia, for example, and allow the process of internationalizing the movement to begin.¹⁰⁰ The black Africans and Americans would not only provide diversity to the London Mission, but would demonstrate the equality preached as a characteristic of Islam. The Ahmadiyya missionaries had never viewed London as purely a local operation, but as a location for a global *tabligh*. In August 1920, Sayyal was in Paris and Nayyar reported that the 'purpose of mission was not just to establish it in the British Isles, but to centralize it in Britain and reach out to the world'. In a period of six years, this aim was achieved, if only in embryonic form.¹⁰¹

The London missionaries continued to seek a location to construct London's first mosque. Finding a site outside of central London would not be as challenging, as land was more available and less expensive, and finances were certainly a major problem. The funding of the London missionaries was handled from Qadian, with additional donations from the new converts, but their resources were not able to financially sustain a working purpose-built mosque in London. On 6 January 1920, a scheme for collecting funds for the London mosque was announced by the caliph in Qadian. In 1919, the caliph had urged the growing numbers of Ahmadis in India to get behind the mosque project in London. In front of large crowds of followers, he had declared that a mosque in London was necessary, as it would bring the blessings of Allah to the endeavour and complete the task that had been initiated with the sending of missionaries. He announced

that the mosque would be the global centre for *tabligh* not only in Britain, but throughout Europe and farther afield in Africa. An initial request was made for 30,000 rupees to be raised to purchase a small house for the missionaries' accommodation and a temporary mosque facility. An account was opened in London to receive donations. The caliph told the crowd:

Non Ahmadi Muslims raise 20,000–30,000 rupees for mosques that are in places where they not even required. Our community is expected to do better. England has been the headquarters of Trinitarian teachings and we have the chance for the Azan (prayer call) to go out there in London and we will see the fruits for future generations.¹⁰²

By 1920, Indian fund-raising was in full swing, with zealous Ahmadi Muslims passionately getting behind the project. At the beginning of the year, the caliph wrote to London describing the zeal of the people. In two days in January, 17,000 rupees were collected in Qadian and added to the 7,000 rupees already in the fund. The caliph mentions the women of the town, who had raised 2,000 rupees, even selling their jewellery. Donations were made on behalf of their children and even deceased relatives to gain blessings in the afterlife. Men were selling plots of land they had purchased for future house-building. The madrasa students, noted for their poverty, had raised 350 rupees, but the most poignant tale was that of a small boy who had donated all his savings (thirteen and a half rupees). The caliph informed London that the fund-raising had been extended to Amritsar, Lahore and Gurdaspur and that the target was raised to 100,000 rupees, to be reached within the next month.¹⁰³ It was not to occur as fast as the caliph hoped, but by 10 June, 78,500 rupees had been raised.¹⁰⁴ As a postscript, Nayyar was able to reply to the caliph in June, informing him that a woman convert in London had been so touched after reading about the boy who donated all his savings that she provided the sum to be returned to him, saying, 'Send there, five shillings to his Holiness for handing over to the boy who gave all his savings in the London Mosque Fund and let him know that an Ahmadi sister miles away appreciates his action'.¹⁰⁵ In all, donations were collected from 210 places in India.¹⁰⁶

Sayyal's return for a second spell in London brought not only a reinforcement of the missionary presence, but also much-needed experience and familiarity with the British scenario, and he would soon find a plot of land for sale from a Jewish acquaintance. The land was close to the suburb of Putney, or, more precisely, Southfields near Wimbledon. The plot had orchards, but more significantly for the missionaries, there were already two houses there. The location in Melrose Avenue was purchased for £2,223.¹⁰⁷ On 9 September 1920, it was

joyfully announced by the caliph in Dharamsala, where he was on tour with the inner circle of Ahmadi leadership. It is said that they composed couplets in celebration and sang them all night.¹⁰⁸ On the same date, *Al-Fazl* informed its readers and declared that the architectural plans for the mosque had been drawn up and would be sent to the caliph for approval.¹⁰⁹

From the moment of the land purchase, the community moved swiftly. By the end of the year, Nayyar was able to report that the house had been renovated and furnished and the missionaries had moved in.¹¹⁰ Nayyar initially remained in the old location in central London, as so many people knew the address. However, he was to leave for West Africa in January 1921, and all the rooms in the London property were rented out, except one that was kept for central London activities. On 6 February 1921, a large meeting took place in London to announce the developments to all interested parties.¹¹¹ A sign was placed in the garden, announcing: 'Ahmadiya [sic] Movement, The Limes, Melrose Road, Putney'.¹¹²

By 1923, the sign had been changed to 'Ahmadiyya Masjid' and the garden had been cultivated. *Near East* magazine reported on the celebration of Eid at the premises, describing that there were around ninety people from England, Germany, Poland, India, Egypt and East and West Africa. Both Khalid Sheldrake and Quilliam/de Léon were in attendance with their wives, and the latter delivered the sermon in English. In spite of being in the London suburbs, the fledgling mosque had become a meeting place for at least some of the city's Muslims seeking a venue to celebrate the festivals of Islam.¹¹³ The missionary in charge of the London Mission would now also function as the imam of the mosque. Dard took charge in 1924, with Malik Ghulam Farid as his deputy. In the same year, publication of *The Review of Religions* would be moved to London, with Dard as editor. In 1925, the mosque foundations were dug out and a construction company was hired.¹¹⁴

In 1924, the LMM received a massive boost with the visit of the second caliph to London. The caliph had accepted an invitation to speak at the Conference of Religions in Wembley¹¹⁵ and arrived on 21 August at Victoria Station, where he led prayers for around 300 Muslims in Ludgate Circus, and then went on to pray in St Paul's Cathedral. The panel for the Islamic section of the conference was dominated by Ahmadiyya speakers. The caliph delivered a ninety-minute lecture on the Ahmadiyya, while one of his companions, Roshan Ali, was selected to speak on Sufism.¹¹⁶ Sunni Islam was represented by Kamal-ud-Din, and the only lecture not delivered by someone connected with the Ahmadiyya was on Shi'a Islam. The panel was presided over by Sir Theodore Morison (1863–1936).¹¹⁷



Figure 7 The second Caliph Mirza Basheer-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad (1889–1965) arrives in London in 1924. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

Prior to the conference, the caliph had embarked on a tour, first visiting Portsmouth to support the small community of Ahmadiyya there. His London lectures included the Spiritualist church, the Universal church and the Reform Club. The caliph visited both Houses of Parliament, where he was taken round by Sir Frederick Hall.¹¹⁸ He also went to the Royal Pavilion in Brighton, where he offered prayers at the memorial for Indian soldiers who had died in World War I,¹¹⁹ and visited the location of the hospital where wounded soldiers from India, including a number of Ahmadis, had been treated.¹²⁰

There were a number of features of interest in the caliph's visit. It is apparent from the question and answer sessions some already dealt with earlier in this chapter, the caliph would not compromise with the normative practices of South Asian Islam. In Portsmouth, for example, he met with some women converts and exhorted them to conform to Islamic standards on dress codes and modesty.¹²¹ Although his stated purpose was to promote Islam, he did not miss the opportunity to promote the Ahmadiyya narrative or the special place of Britain in Ahmadiyya understandings of the future. In an interview with *The Star* newspaper, he declared his intention to 'only propagate the message of Allah. The universe seeks peace ... The push for peace can only come about through the

teachings of the Quran', and affirmed the significance of Britain to the Ahmadiyya vision of Islamic mission: 'What is our expectation from England? The nation stands for freedom, it offers freedom and therefore helps us to convey the truth to the people of England and this is the only way forward for the deliverance of mankind'.¹²² A few days later, he was more overt concerning the role of Ahmad. Nayyar had invited most of the major newspaper editors to meet the caliph, and a prepared press release was read to them by Zafrullah Khan. It declared: 'There is a prophecy about England made by our founder who had specific expectations of England. He was the promised messiah and the prince of peace, come to establish peace'.¹²³

The media coverage of the caliph's visit was prolific, encouraging *Al-Fazl* to announce to its readership that no other Indian religious leader had received so much attention.¹²⁴ The caliph was welcomed by Muslims in London. He went to tea at the home of Khalid Sheldrake and was visited by Quilliam/de Léon and his wife on numerous occasions, along with various dignitaries representing Muslim nations in London, including all the staff of the Turkish Embassy. The caliph, in turn, visited both the Turkish and Afghan Embassies.¹²⁵ *Al-Fazl* records gatherings of Indian students and Muslims of Asian background meeting the caliph and claims that 'among the older Muslims there is now a sense of invitation and they are coming to meet the Caliph and attending functions, with many people requesting to meet with him'.¹²⁶ Many people were reported to have attended the 'At Home' meeting in Putney, including many Asian Muslims of all nationalities and the media.¹²⁷ It was also noted that Indian students had requested him to speak and eat with them.¹²⁸ Only Kamal-ud-Din was conspicuously absent and



Figure 8 Mirza Basheer-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad and his companions at the Wembley Conference of Religions, 1924. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

avoided the caliph, even offering his apologies to the conference organizers and having his paper read out by Abdullah Yusef Ali.¹²⁹

Before ending his visit to England, the caliph spent some time reorganizing the London Mission. Nayyar would return to India, while Sayyal would remain. Dard was placed in charge of the London Mission and given responsibility for *The Review of Religions*, now moved from Qadian to London,¹³⁰ and the development of the London mosque. A new missionary, Ghulam Farid, was appointed to work in Britain. It was decided that the foundation of the London mosque would be funded by a loan from Berlin. On 20 October 1924, a telegram was sent to India announcing that the caliph had laid the foundation stone of the mosque at 4 pm on 19 October. It was attended by gathering of around 200 Muslims, including many converts. The mayor of Wandsworth attended, and the prime minister sent a congratulatory telegram. Around twelve photographers from the national press were present. The caliph spoke the following words, reinforcing the ecumenical spirit of London's Muslims:

A mosque is the house of God, where no-one engages in doctrinal disputes, and as result of that cause someone to remove him from the house of God. I want to announce to the world that this mosque has been constructed to worship the one God. We will not stop anyone from worshipping here as long the principles of this mosque are maintained.¹³¹

The mosque was named Masjid Fazl. On 25 October, the caliph and his entourage departed for Paris, where he led the first public prayers in the newly opened Paris Central mosque before returning to India.¹³²

This chapter has explored the fortunes of the Ahmadiyya missionaries after the break with Woking and the move to London. The key developments were the pursuit of a mosque and the visit of the caliph in 1924. In the preceding decade, the London branch had reorganized as the LMM, working closely with Qadian to provide new missionaries, materials for publicity and the direction of Islam in Britain. The LMM used cosmopolitan London to reach out to other parts of the world and establish missions in the United States, Germany, France, Holland and parts of Africa, with the London Mission as the international headquarters of these global activities. Relations with Woking were strained, with Kamal-ud-Din rejecting the possibility of meeting the caliph in London, yet somehow the LMM maintained correspondence and visits from prominent London converts, including Lord Headley, despite his very close friendship with Kamal-ud-Din. Even more difficult, considering the open proselytizing of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the 'Promised Messiah', the missionaries kept contact with Indian and



Figure 9 Mirza Basheer-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad at the foundation ceremony of London (Al-Fazl) mosque, Southfields, 1924. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

other foreign national Muslims. They also succeeded in attracting some English converts. All of this took place in the context of a growing Muslim presence that desperately sought to avoid sectarian division. The next chapter will explore the development of the al-Fazl mosque, the first purpose-built mosque in London, and the ways it changed the direction of the Ahmadiyya Mission, leading up to the independence of India and partition.

A Mosque in London: Transformations to the LMM

This chapter explores the opening of the Al-Fazl mosque in 1926, the way the mosque was used by London's Muslims and the subsequent transformations of the Ahmadiyya that would impact the way they promoted Islam in the capital city and beyond. The quest for a mosque in London was considered an imperative among several Islamic groups and Muslim individuals in the Edwardian and interwar periods. As converts and foreign resident Muslims in the capital of the British Empire increased in number, both groups felt the need for the mosque to serve the community's religious and social requirements. The idea of a mosque in the largest and most important city in the world would also have huge symbolic value.

An early effort to develop a mosque in London had been made by Hajji Mahomed Dollie. In December 1895, Dollie gave up a portion of his home at Albert Street, Regent's Park, to become a temporary place of worship. It would bring together Muslims from many parts of the world, including the Ottoman Empire and India. The London Temporary Mosque, as it was known, also established itself as a place for converts and was able to attract some English men and women to Islam.¹ In October 1898, it was moved to 189 Euston Road but was still not a permanent place of worship.²

Another early attempt was made by Ameer Ali, working along with Abbas Ali Baig. The two Indian Muslims established a London Mosque Fund Committee in 1910, with the support of Sir Thomas Arnold. Donations were raised from India, Turkey and Persia. However, both of these figures were involved in securing Woking in 1912 and delayed their efforts for a London mosque.³ This activity by Indian Muslims would become part of the early origins of the East London mosque.⁴ Three houses were purchased and made into a place of worship in Stepney in 1926, but it was not until August 1941 that the East London mosque was inaugurated.

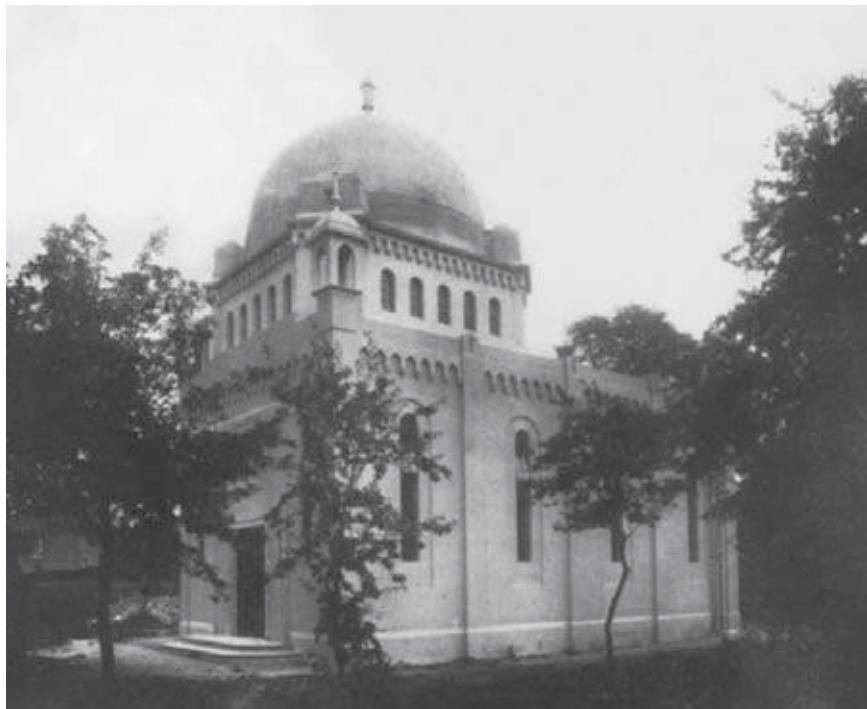


Figure 10 Al-Fazl mosque, Southfields, London's first purpose-built mosque. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

Kamal-ud-Din and Lord Headley would campaign tirelessly for a central London mosque to be granted land by the British government, something along the lines of the central mosque in Paris that opened in 1926. In 1928, the Nizamiah Mosque Trust was given a donation of £60,000 by the Nizam of Hyderabad and a site was purchased in Kensington, with a foundation stone laid in 1937, but the plans went no further. Ansari considers that the impetus for the project disappeared after the deaths of Headley and Kamal-ud-Din in the 1930s.⁵ It was not until 1940 that the vision for a central mosque in London came to fruition. Finally, the British government gave in to persuasion to offer a site in Regent's Park. On 24 October, the Churchill War Cabinet authorized an allocation of £100,000 for acquisition of the mosque site in London.⁶ The donation was accepted by a mosque committee comprising Muslim diplomats and prominent Muslim residents, and the Islamic Cultural Centre was opened in November 1944 by His Majesty King George VI. Yet the present site in Regent's Park, with its capacity for 5,000 worshippers, was not opened until 1978.

The presence of prominent Indian Muslims working alongside converts and seeking patronage or funds from Indian royalty is indicative of their growing number in London in the interwar period and the changing demography of Muslims in Britain. Kamal ud-Din, Headley and Dollie were able to provide a commonality of ideas and methods, which demonstrated a liberality in practice that would foster an Islam that could accommodate British cultural norms, but the London Ahmadiyya, loyal to Qadiani leadership, were moving in a more conservative direction.

In the history of the Ahmadiyya there is a telling line: 'much hue and cry over the mosque'.⁷ Whether it refers to the actual weeks leading up to the opening of the mosque or the period between the departing of the caliph in late 1924 and October 1926, when the mosque opened, is not clear. It is certain that much of the effort of the missionaries would be taken up with the mosque initiative. A construction company was hired and the foundation laid in 1925. On 3 October 1926, almost exactly two years after the caliph laid the foundation stone, the first purpose-built mosque in London was inaugurated. Abdul Rahim Dard was the missionary in charge of the London Mission at the time and took on the post of the first imam.

In the weeks leading up to the opening of the Al-Fazl mosque, a number of British newspapers reported the event and the proposed intention of Prince Faisal bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, the third son of the king of Saudi Arabia and recently appointed viceroy of Hejaz, to open the mosque officially.⁸ Dard explained to *The Evening Herald* that the mosque was historically significant, as it heralded a time when 'the whole of England would one day be Muslim'.⁹ He explained that the movement had no involvement in politics and that Jews and Christians would also be free to pray in the building. He positioned the Ahmadiyya as non-violent and numbering around one million worldwide. *The Evening Standard* would pick up on this and report on 23 September that the mosque would be opened by those Muslims who are opposed to the concept of jihad.¹⁰ The opening would also generate international interest and a general awakening of the British press to the presence of Muslims in Britain. On 4 October, *The Yorkshire Post* would claim, 'More than 3,000 English people have accepted Islam'. *The Daily Sketch* and *The Times of India* focused on the British civil dignitaries who would attend, noting that Lord Sheffield, along with the mayor of Wandsworth and MPs representing Oxford, Cambridge, Newcastle, Manchester, Blackpool, Dundee, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Derby and Leicester, would attend. *The Statesman* in Calcutta headlined: 'London's first mosque opens in a garden'.¹¹

Dard's impressions of the occasion were reported in *Al-Fazl* a month later. He considered that twenty-five years earlier such a function would have been



Figure 11 British Muslims attend the opening of Al-Fazl mosque, 1926. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

impossible. It is true that the London and Woking Missions had placed Islam on an organizational footing in London. Around 600 people gathered for the opening event, estimated at 1,000 by the Indian politician and high court judge Khan Bahadur Sheikh Abdul Qadir (1872–1950), who officially opened the mosque.¹² More than 100 attended the first public prayer session in the mosque, including many English converts. The first *azan* was called from the mosque roof by Malik Ghulam Farid, one of the Indian missionaries, but the first call to prayer from inside the mosque was by a new convert, Bilal Daniel Hawker Nuttall, who had recently accepted Islam from Dard. In Dard's words:

The scene on the streets was astonishing. There were men and woman surrounding the place and the streets were packed with people and cars. People were on the walls and in the trees. The police were present to control the crowds. A tent was put up in the garden containing 250 chairs. Flags were placed on the roadside, and a fountain was built in front of mosque ... There was no room in the tent and many people gathered around the fountain to gaze on the mosque.¹³

Among the converted British Muslims attending were Quilliam/de Léon and his wife, Abdullah Philby (1885–1960), and Khalid Sheldrake. The latter wrote of his feelings:

The opening of the mosque was spectacular. In the history of Islam in Britain there had never been such a major gathering before. Six hundred people came for tea including MP and Ministers, members of the House of Lords, ambassadors,

Nawabs, Rajahs, former government officials of India, and some famous Turkish and English Muslim attended this gathering. I think all the Muslims of the UK were there. Sir Archibald Hamilton could not attend because a family member had died. The police were controlling this area of thousands of people. Cars had blocked the whole street. It was extraordinary. This was a major propagation of Islam and as a result people are coming to me daily asking me about Islam. It was a great source of promotion for Islam in London and the seekers of truth turned towards Islam and a number of men and women accepted Islam because of it.¹⁴

There was to be no suggestion that the mosque was sectarian or outside the confines of Islam because it was Ahmadiyya. Sheikh Abdul Qadir stated in his opening speech, 'I am not Ahmadi but I am very proud of this occasion'.¹⁵ There was one major concern for the Ahmadiyya missionaries that had the potential to spoil the occasion. Sheikh Abdul Qadir was a last-minute stand-in for the original invitee. As stated, it had been heralded in the British media that Prince Faisal would open the mosque.¹⁶ Faisal had indeed arrived at Paddington Station on 23 September, where he was met by civic dignitaries including Abdur Rahim Dard, the imam of the Al-Fazl mosque. Faisal's visit was also a major political event. King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud (1875–1953), the founder of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was sending his son to Britain to demonstrate gratitude to the king of England for the help that the British government had given to the Saud family to attain the throne and for their formal recognition of the regime. A letter to Whitehall from the political agent of Great Britain to Hejaz stated that 'it is also rumoured locally that whilst in England, Emir Feisal will inaugurate a Mohammedan Church'.¹⁷ The Ahmadiyya Muslims were honoured to have such an illustrious person to open the London mosque. According to *The Daily Telegraph*, they had originally requested King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud to open the mosque himself,¹⁸ and the king had replied that he would not be able to attend, but would send his son Emir Faisal, the viceroy of Makkah, on his behalf.¹⁹ *The Times* covered the story closely on 2 October and mentioned that Prince Faisal would be arriving at the ceremony.²⁰ It was only half an hour before the start of events that Dard received a telegraph from the foreign secretary of the king, stating that Prince Faisal would not be attending the ceremony. The message read:

I very greatly regret having to inform you that his Highness the Emir Feisal Ibn Abdulla Aziz Al Saud will not be able to attend. This is a matter which occasions his Highness very great regret, and both his Highness and myself wish all success to yourself and all prosperity and blessings to the great Mosque. And we pray God to grant your work that success.²¹

The reasons for the sudden cancellation are unknown, but the Ahmadiyya believe that someone warned the king at the last minute of the unique doctrines of the movement. *The Times* would pick up on the issue, and reported that the WMM had distanced itself from the initiative and that this was a sectarian issue within Islam.²² Sheldrake wrote, 'Amir Faisal's absence gave it major publicity and even more fame than if he had attended'.²³ Philby also commented on Prince Faisal's failure to attend, saying, 'Ibn Saud wasted this opportunity for no reason at all. He could have proved that he was a leader of the Islamic community. He has harmed himself not you'.²⁴ Some Egyptian Muslims also protested, and claimed that Faisal did not even have time to come to a mosque.²⁵ These reactions from some foreign and converted Muslims show that not everyone considered it to be a sectarian issue, as reported in *The Times*, but some chose to feel that the opening of a purpose-built mosque in London transcended such issues.

Over the next ten years, Dard would consolidate the position of the mosque as a place where Muslims in London could gather, not only for worship but as a centre to discuss the burning issues of the time. An important postscript to the mystery of Faisal's sudden cancellation is that his elder brother, Amir Saud bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (1902–1969), travelled to London in 1935 and visited the



Figure 12 The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Amir Saud bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (1902–1969), visits the Al-Fazl mosque, July 1935. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

mosque in July. The visit was part of the official tour, and the crown prince entertained the American, Cuban and Mexican ambassadors to Britain along with Sir A. Ryan, the British Ambassador to Jidda.²⁶ It would appear that after nine years functioning as London's only mosque, the sectarian issue had disappeared for the Saudi royal family

Political events that would dramatically change relations between Britain and India, and significantly involve Indian Muslims staying in London, would transform the activities of the Ahmadiyya missionaries in the 1930s and 1940s. Dard returned to London in February 1933 for a second spell as imam of Al-Fazl mosque, and the existing missionary in London, Farzand Ali, returned to Qadian in April 1934 after being in charge since 1928. The Ahmadiyya accounts state:

During the period of Dard and Ali there was not just expansion in preaching but the mission proved to be a champion of the rights of Muslims around the world, specifically Muslims of India, and especially the rights of Muslims in Kashmir. Masjid Fazl became a centre meeting point for subcontinent people of influence.²⁷

These new political activities need to be examined carefully, as they transformed the missionary focus on British converts and brought a new commitment to championing the 'rights of Muslims around the world, specifically the Muslims of India' cited above. The arrival of Ahmad's family members, including his grandson, the future third caliph, to study in London not only cemented the increasing significance of the city in Ahmadiyya plans, but also brought renewed missionary zeal to promote the movement to Indian university students. New periodicals would appear in London. Among the younger-generation Ahmadiyya, Mirza Nasir Ahmad and Mirza Said Ahmad published a journal, *Al-Islam*, out of London, and *The Muslim Times* was published from 6 June 1935. On 26 February 1936, Sher Ali went to London to work on the final touches of the English translation of the Qur'an.²⁸

As early as 1921, Sayyal had noted that 'nowadays there are so many Hindustani Ahmadis'. The total of thirteen does not appear to be many compared to the estimated 30,000 Ahmadis in Britain today, but it was sufficient to be commented upon by the missionary.²⁹ It was this ability to attract adherents to the Ahmadiyya from among the Indian Muslims in London that surprised the missionaries and, from 1926, combined with the reality of a mosque in London to herald a change in direction (or at least in emphasis), that would transform the mission.

An analysis of *The Muslim Times*, published fortnightly from 6 June 1935 under the editorship of Dard, also shows a subtle change in the priorities of the

missionaries. *The Times* commented that the new Muslim periodical 'discusses matters of general Moslem interest ... but in particular interprets the views of the Ahmadiyas, whose spiritual leader has his headquarters at Qadian, in the Punjab'.³⁰ *The Near East and India* commented that *The Muslim Times* (and *Al-Islam*) existed to 'clear away the cloud of misapprehension which is held by the Editors to surround Islam as far as the people of this country is concerned'. The article describes the first issue as containing 'notes on Mecca, and Jerusalem, Turkey and Iraq ... and a discussion of Muslim dissensions in India'.³¹ In that first issue, the editorial states that the aim of the periodical is to 'respect and appreciate the traditions and aspirations of each and every Muslim country. We shall try to put the Muslim case – be it Iranian, Egyptian, Indian, Iraqi, Turkish, West or South African, Albanian, Chinese, Arabian or Afghan – before the Western people'. To achieve this aim, the editor comments, 'We shall try to steer clear of theological controversy, which causes bitterness and hatred, though we do not believe in hiding the light under a bushel. We intend to serve, in our own humble way, the truest and best interests of Islam and Muslims'.³²

The newspaper does quote, under its title, the prophesy made by Ahmad in 1891, 'the Western people shall enter into Islam in large numbers', but it would take a leap of the imagination to examine the paper's contents as primarily directed towards Western converts or the conversion of English men and women. The contents concerning various aspects of the changing reality of Muslim countries, particularly articles associating modernization with Westernization and the subsequent loss of Islamic life, do not appear to be directed primarily towards enlightening the British with regard to Islam. The newspaper seems to be directed towards the growing population of foreign Muslim nationals living in London. The contents are concerned about positioning the Ahmadiyya politically in India, where the expanding independence movement and the growth of Congress are placing the movement's loyalty to the British governance of India under scrutiny. Notably absent from the issues of *The Muslim Times* in 1935 are any articles on the development of the mission in London or any news of British converts. *The Muslim Times* does report periodically on Ahmadiyya conversions around the world. In 1935, only one Ahmadi conversion is reported in the British Isles, only two are listed in the first six months of 1936 and a further two are recorded from 25 May to 29 September 1936.³³ This has to be placed in the context of 1,198 new members in Punjab in the first six months of 1936.³⁴ The absence of any news of conversion in a newspaper published for Muslims in Britain in 1935 is significant. The main focus was on events in India, and to a lesser extent Palestine and crises in the Middle East. The newspaper published

the Friday sermons and conference speeches of the third caliph, Mirza Mahmood Ahmad, who was naturally concerned with the situation in India. The principal concern of *The Muslim Times* in 1935 was the increasing conflict between the Ahrar and the Ahmadiyyat, and this continued throughout 1936 and 1937.

In December 1935, under the headline 'The Ahrar Doctrines', it was announced that the leader of the Ahrar, speaking at the Ahrar Volunteer Conference in Sialkot, Punjab, had declared that it was necessary 'to establish the principle of waging a Holy War for winning complete freedom for India on a permanent footing' and declared India as *dar al-Harb* (a territory of war). The speaker referred to the Ahmadiyya and their loyalty to the British as representative of 'poisonous movements' that 'cannot be tolerated'.³⁵ The same issue reprints an article from *The Canton Truth* published in China on 12 October 1935 which tries to unravel the changing relationship between the Ahmadiyya and the Indian Congress. The article states:

Obedience to the law of the land has been a cardinal principle of faith with the Ahmadiyyas. During the anti-Rowlat [sic] Act agitation, the non-cooperation movement and the Congress agitation, Ahmadiyyas lent their whole-hearted support to the British Government and were greatly responsible for the aloofness of North India Muhammadens [sic] from nationalistic activities.

The article notes that, in spite of Zafrullah Khan's appointment to the viceroy's Executive Council, the government of Sir Herbert Emerson remained silent on Ahmadiyya grievances in order to win over the orthodox majority. The article declares that the Ahmadiyya are now to organize national bodies all over India to throw their whole weight into supporting Congress, 'an opportunity to dissipate the general belief that the Ahmadiyyas are the agents of the British'.³⁶

In the first issue of 1936, *The Muslim Times* reports on the response of Jawarhar Lal Nehru to Sir Mohammad Iqbal's complaint that the Ahmadiyyat threatened the solidarity of Islam. Nehru cited the case of the Aga Khan, the spiritual leader of the Ismailis, and asked whether they should also be classed as outside the 'pale of Islam'.³⁷ Iqbal's opposition to the Ahmadiyya would appear to be a change of heart. In the Simla meeting, where many of India's prominent Muslim leaders had gathered to discuss the future of Kashmir, Iqbal had proposed that the Ahmadiyya caliph should be president of the All-India Kashmir Committee.³⁸

These anti-Ahmadiyya campaigns in India reflected their growing numerical significance in the Punjab and beyond. The movement was well organized and

could mobilize its resources effectively. Its opponents attempted to neutralize its influence through attacks on its position vis-à-vis loyalty to the British government and, if that failed, to expel the movement from Islam based on its unique interpretation of the finality of Prophethood. The first criticism was neutralized when the movement finally allied itself to Congress.

These increasing involvements in Indian Muslim politics during the campaigns for independence began to dominate the content of *Al-Fazl*, an Urdu organ printed in Qadian, but *The Muslim Times* was printed in English in London and was supposedly aimed at British Muslims. The content would suggest that the paper was primarily addressed to Indian and other foreign Muslims in London, especially as many of the Indian Muslims were involved in Muslim politics in India and the place of Muslims in an independent India. The arrival of Maulana Jaladud Din Shams, a new missionary in London, on 28 March 1936 is announced in *The Muslim Times*, and he is portrayed in terms more likely to appeal to foreign Muslims in London. The newspaper states: 'He is an eloquent speaker in Urdu and Arabic. His services to the cause of Kashmiri Muslims at a most critical time have endeared him very much to his co-religionists. He is held in high esteem by the masses in India and also in Egypt and Palestine'.³⁹ The welcome goes on to describe the first speech of the new arrival, revealing that his command of the English language is relatively weak.⁴⁰

From 1936 to 1938, the paper reports major events at the mosque. Simultaneous to the increase in numbers of Indian Muslims in London and the Ahmadiyya taking a major role in Indian Muslim politics, *Al-Fazl* mosque was functioning as the official centre of Muslim worship in London. For foreign Muslims, especially those from India, the mosque became a central meeting place for more than worship and celebration of Muslim festivals and rites of passage. In addition, it became a place for Muslim dignitaries to gather officially. The degree to which the mosque fulfils the function of representing London's foreign Muslim population can be determined from the recorded accounts of Islamic festivals and the lists of attending dignitaries. In March 1936, *The Wandsworth Borough News* reported on Eid ul-Azha celebrations at the London mosque. The newspaper observes that there were around 200 guests, including Muslims from India, Egypt, Africa and Britain. Two convert children, a boy and a girl, recited from the Qur'an before the Right Honourable L. S. Amery, and Lord Lloyd addressed the gathering, speaking on 'Islam and the British Empire'. The list of attendees mentions a large number of embassy and consulate officials, including ambassadors from Russia and Turkey, a Saudi minister, the high commissioner of India and various former officers of the Raj, including Sir Michael

O'Dwyer,⁴¹ Sir Edward Grigg,⁴² Major General Sir Percy Cox,⁴³ a number of MPs, government ministers, and the mayors and mayoresses of Wandsworth and the City of Westminster.⁴⁴ Many of the British dignitaries were retired officials from the British Raj who had gone on to create successful political careers in Britain and retained their interest in Indian culture and politics. For example, Leopold Charles Maurice Stennett Amery (1873–1955), usually known as Leo Amery or L. S. Amery, was a Conservative Party politician and journalist who was born in Gorakhpur, India. He was First Lord of the Admiralty (1922–1924) and colonial secretary (1924–1929). George Ambrose Lloyd, first Baron Lloyd (1879–1941), was also a conservative politician. In December 1918 he was appointed governor of Bombay. Their stances on Indian independence reveal commonality with the Ahmadiyya stance. During the 1930s, Lord Lloyd was one of the most prominent opponents of proposals to grant Indian home rule, and Leo Amery, a relative of Leitner,⁴⁵ supported a gradual withdrawal that maintained close links between Britain and India.⁴⁶

A similar gathering took place the following year and was reported in the national press, including *The Times*, *The Daily Express*, and *The South-Western Star*.⁴⁷ On this occasion the speakers were Lord Zetland, secretary of state for India, and Lord Hailey.⁴⁸ The list of guests is equally distinguished.⁴⁹ Other functions held at the mosque included a reception for Sir Mohammad Zafrullah Khan in June 1936 attended by Sir Firozehan Noon, the high commissioner of India, Lord Sankey and a number of Indian and British diplomats.⁵⁰ *The Muslim Times* offers a glimpse of the types of visitors to the mosque in August 1936. The article reports visits by a lieutenant colonel and his wife; Maulvi Nazir Ahmad, ex-financial minister of Kashmir; Mr Goodwin, a British author; a Swiss professor of Semitic languages accompanied by his wife; and J. Hartog, a Dutch journalist. Most would stay for a tour of the mosque and a session of questions and answers with the imam, and some would attend Friday prayers.⁵¹ On 15 July 1936, the mosque was visited by thirty German children who were taking part in the International Youth Rally as part of a cooperation between the International Summer Schools and the London Headmasters' Committee. A number of British Muslims, both men and women, received the international visitors, and speeches were given by several Indian Muslims, including missionaries and clerics.⁵²

These public and formal functions that took place in the mosque indicate that the sectarian element was not particularly prominent. The mosque performed the functions expected of London's only official place of Muslim worship. Attendance by civic dignitaries at the celebrations of Muslim festivals and visits



Figure 13 Eid ul-Fitr gathering on the grounds of Al-Fazl mosque, 1930. Courtesy of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

by high-profile non-Muslims and schoolchildren as part of a cross-cultural dialogue were not the only non-religious activities that took place in the mosque. Such occasions might cement relations between London's Muslims and high-ranking members of the host population, but other meetings that took place in the mosque would have far-reaching consequences for relations between Britain and India.

The undoubted allegiance of Zafrullah Khan to the Ahmadiyya and his role in the missionary endeavour from his university years in London ensured a prominent role for the London mosque in the politics of independence and partition. The roundtable discussions on the future of India would bring Zafrullah Khan, Jinnah and Iqbal to London, and each would attend the mosque on various occasions. Dard would meet with a despondent Jinnah in March 1933 to convince him that he had to return to India and pick up leadership of the nation's Muslims. Jinnah listened to the impassioned plea, and to symbolize his return to nationalist politics, Dard arranged for a lecture on the future of India at the London mosque in April 1933. Jinnah's address criticized the white paper on Indian constitutional reform and argued for self-government. The meeting was presided over by Sir Nairne Sandeman, and Jinnah confirmed the missionary's role in his decision, stating that 'the eloquent persuasion of the Imam left me no way of escape'.⁵³ Dard would later reveal in his writings that the most powerful argument he used was to persuade Jinnah that abandoning politics at that juncture in time would be a betrayal of the Muslim cause.⁵⁴

As World War II progressed, *The Muslim Times* records that preaching continued throughout the conflict and that the mosque was sometimes used as a shelter during the Blitz. Debates still went on in Hyde Park, and the Qur'an was translated into German, Dutch, Russian, Italian, French, Polish and Spanish under the supervision of Munirud Din Shams, who remained in Britain throughout the war. In 1941, Zafrullah Khan gave a speech in Simla in which he spoke of a new world order that would be heralded by the end of the war.⁵⁵ He was right to point out that the world could never be the same and that the independence and partition of India would have dramatic consequences for the Ahmadiyya movement. Gilham observes that the missionary endeavour in Britain slowly petered out. He notes that the mosque was only opened twice a year during the war, for the two Eids, because so few Ahmadis were present in the capital.⁵⁶ Slowly the conversion of English men and women declined, also true in Woking, to a lesser extent. Few converts were gained after the war, and Gilham quotes the leadership of the Qadian Ahmadiyya as saying, 'There is no appreciable progress. We have not found even a dozen energetic Englishmen to dedicate themselves for the cause of Islam'.⁵⁷

The reasons for the shift in emphasis from converts to the foreign Muslim presence in London, especially Indian Muslims, can be explained by the increasing population in the 1930s and the involvement of London's only mosque in the activities of foreign Muslims. In addition, the Ahmadiyya leadership in India was increasingly involved in independence and partition politics. Peter Clark claims that in 1924, there were approximately 1,000 British Muslim converts 'scattered about the country' and 10,000 from overseas.⁵⁸ However, the post-partition period from 1947 saw the departure of the majority of London's Indian community, as many of them returned to take up political or diplomatic posts.⁵⁹ In between these two dates, the Muslim population in the capital and elsewhere in Britain increased to such an extent that the Mecca Stores Ltd, the first company in Britain to supply halal meat and other products, was established.⁶⁰ *The Muslim Times* goes on to comment that 'Muslim visitors come to England from all over the world and thousands of students carried on their studies in this country'.⁶¹ Al-Fazl mosque would have a central role for this increased population of Indian Muslims in the capital, playing its own part in independence and partition politics.

This chapter has attempted to show the key changes in direction initiated by the London missionaries after the opening of the mosque in London. Increasingly, the focus of the missionaries turns to the foreign population of Muslims in London, especially those from India. The role of the mosque is

central to understanding this new direction. Indian politics of independence would take up the attention of the missionaries and foreign Indian Muslims in London, and it has been argued that this directly led to a decline in attempts to convert the native population to Islam.

Final Reflections

The early chapters of this book assessed the changing world of Muslims in India as they were confronted with the decline of the Mughal Empire and its final demise after 1857. The focus was on the reactions of various Islamic revivalist movements to the crisis invoked by British power. Drawing upon the slogan 'Islam in danger' first used by Ahmed Sirhindi, these chapters assess those responses from the position of 'manifest success', a theological construct of belief in worldly success as proof of God's favour. From this position, loss of power can create a sense of angst among religious leaders, a conviction that a return to the primal faith or revelation will restore the fortunes of a chosen people. This pattern of behaviour is often exhibited throughout Muslim history, and in India would result in a number of conservative movements that sought to return Muslims to the truths revealed in the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet.

Following Lavan's schema, these chapters place the origin of the Ahmadiyya within the malaise caused by the loss of Muslim power in India. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad began his mission at the same time and in the same milieu as the Shah Wali-Allah-inspired Ahl-i Hadith and Deobandis and the modernist responses of Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Ahmad's solution is radical. He first argues that the crisis is so severe, only a direct intervention by Allah can resolve it. The situation that India finds itself in is part of a divine plan, a backdrop for the return of the expected Mahdi, who will also be the promised messiah expected by other religions. Ahmad's growing conviction that he is this divinely expected figure leads to two very different approaches than that of the Shah Wali-Allah-inspired revivalists. Ahmad does not accept that British rule is a problem for Indian Muslims, as the global revival of Islam will take place from the West, beginning in London, the capital of the empire. Thus he does not accept that a defensive strategy that focuses Muslims inwards upon themselves, retreating from the British presence by drawing upon the minutiae of Hadith-based jurisprudence and edicts (*fatwa*) to maintain correct Islamic practice, is the way forward. Ahmad challenges the

Christian missionaries in India, attacking them at the very heart of their theological position, by undermining the doctrines of atonement and incarnation and demonstrating that Islam is a more rational version of monotheism. Ansari acknowledges that Indian Muslims experienced a sense of insecurity arising from their minority position and affirms that the arrival of both branches of the Ahmadiyya as Islamic missionary organizations in the interwar years was in part a reaction to this insecurity. The Ahmadiyya would go further than any other Islamic reaction in India and defend Islam in the very heart of the British Empire. Ansari argues that this was possible in a 'globalised colonial context'.¹ Nile Green agrees, but suggests that Indian Muslims stood at the 'frontline' of European imperialism and were 'early adaptors' able to make use of new technologies and networks to expand their activities.²

The only addition that those chapters make to Lavan's schema is that they posit that the Ahmadiyya also have to be perceived in the wider context of an Indian pursuit of a distinct and original contribution to the Muslim cultural and religious milieu. The book draws upon Francis Robinson's concept of 'Perso-Islamic' culture first developed during the time of the Delhi sultanates and flourishing throughout the Mughal period. In this respect, a unique Indian contribution to Muslim civilization, where the syncretistic milieu of the Sufi and the yogi created sacred music, poetry and literature, and developed vernacular languages as well as distinct religious practices and iconoclastic attitudes towards the world of the *ulama* and the pandit. Robinson argues that this world came under threat as the Mughal Empire expired, and a return to a more Arab-based understanding of Islam was led by the revivalist *ulama*, who were visiting the Hejaz for pilgrimage and religious inspiration. As the ashraf class declined with the loss of power, many of its members became the leaders of the new revival of Islam. Ahmad was part of this milieu by background, and he was also from the Punjab, where the old Perso-Islamic culture had been strong. Ahmad's Islam, like the revivalists', is conservative in practice and he agrees it must be based upon the Qur'an and the Sunna, but in declaring a new prophetic mission led by an Indian, he places India rather than Arab heartlands at the core of a new global Islamic renaissance.

Those early chapters supply the context of an unlikely relationship between an Indian Islamic revivalist and the British, one that would lead to Ahmad's opponents accusing him of collaboration and even being a pawn in British tactics to divide Muslims from one another. With the historical context set, the details of Ahmad's attempts to court the West while simultaneously attacking Christian missionaries are explored. The prophesies and revelations are interpreted to

demonstrate the revival of Islam under Ahmad's leadership taking place from Britain, and there is a conscious strategy to court Western converts, both new and existing. The publication of *The Review of Religions* is seen in fulfilment of Ahmad's vow to 'destroy the cross' and create a vehicle for the inspiration of Western converts.

The politics of Empire transformed the attitudes and actions of India's Islamic reformers, but only Ahmad sees the opportunity to send missionaries to London. He is not completely alone in this endeavour, but his vision is that Islam can only be successfully promoted in the West if the mission takes an organizational structure of a revivalist movement (*jamaat*). Ahmad recognizes that Abdullah Quilliam shared the same ideal, and he sees the opportunity for continuity. The time was right for Muslims in India to plan for a reverse mission. Ansari agrees, stating, 'In a globalised colonial context, the defense of Islam in South Asia had to start at the very heart of the European metropolis'.³ International travel was becoming easier, the new relationship between Britain and India resulted in a larger population of Indian Muslims in London able to provide support and there was already a small group of committed convert Muslims in the capital with experience campaigning on behalf of Islam and Muslims.

There was far more to what Nile Green calls 'terrains of exchange' than the technological developments of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴ Although steamships would provide the means of traversing the globe for Muslim missionaries and the printing press the means of mass producing vernacular missionary tracts, Green also points out that the arrival of Protestant missionaries in large numbers in India resulted in a hybridity that would influence the organization of Islamic missionary movements.⁵ Green argues that 'Islam came to look more like Christianity', borrowing from the organizational forms of the Christian missions and ways of using print technology.⁶ Yet the hybridity would go further than organizational forms. Contacts between Ahmad and Protestant missionaries were many, ranging from friendship to extreme enmity and death threats. One of the most hostile terrains was Ahmad's use of *mubahasa* and *muhabila*, but these encounters were reactions to the Christian missionary use of public debates (*munazarat*) in which sometimes tens of thousands of people would gather to hear polemical arguments on the respective merits or demerits of rival faiths.⁷ Green points out that the Protestant missions were the 'religious heirs to the Enlightenment', promoting freedom of conscience and access to education and scripture, and reminds us that these missionary societies were the overseers of modern education in India.⁸ This is important. We have seen that the first Ahmadiyya missionaries were often the products of such schools and

colleges, but far more significantly, it can be argued that promoting Islam as a religion of reason free from the trappings of superstition was akin to a Protestant understanding and reinterpretation of the religion. Quilliam may have used such a reformulation of Islam successfully to gain converts before the Indian missionaries in London and Woking, but although he was bitterly opposed to contemporary Christianity, he was a product of nonconformist Christianity. Ahmad's mission emphasized personal faith and private experience, but it was also messianic. The messianic aspects would attract Westerners who were seeking outside the confines of Christianity, delving into esotericism and Theosophical understandings of world messiahs that would originate in the East. Green argues that 'Islam became different things' or 'different Islams'. The Ahmadiyya were part of this process, but I have attempted to show that the British converts and foreign Muslims in London were, at some level, aware of this process and struggled against it but accepted heterogeneity.

I have given close attention to Alexander Webb, as his example shows that not only were Western religious seekers beginning to assess Islam as a possible path, but Indian Muslims were ready to provide financial resources to support Islamic missions started by converts in Europe or the United States. Webb's story also shows how Western converts to Islam were prepared to engage with Ahmad for spiritual leadership.

Webb, Abdullah Quilliam and other early British converts to Islam may not have been brought to the religion directly through Empire; however, as the nineteenth century came to a close, Quilliam would not be able to stay out of imperial politics as the relationship with the Ottomans became more hostile and the British ventured deeper into the Muslim world as part of expansionist policies coming more to the fore. Some British converts would come into contact with Islam through travels or imperial service, finding themselves in Muslim lands at the same time Muslim populations in London expanded. Even before the arrival of Ahmadiyya missionaries, British converts and Indian Muslims in London had begun to make connections with one another, and there was growing awareness that inroads into the capital were necessary. The vacuum created by the collapse of the LMI in Liverpool was filled by Kamal-ud-Din's successful establishment of the WMM, enough for Eric Germain to declare, 'The mission that Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din founded in Woking (Surrey) reactivated and increased Quilliam's English reading public throughout Europe and within the British Empire. Its propaganda effort was a direct response to the worldwide intensification of Christian proselytism among Muslim populations'.⁹

It is indisputable that the Ahmadiyya Muslims dominated both the organisational and spiritual capital required to promote Islam in Britain from 1912 until the advent of World War II. Throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century, their missionaries in both Woking and London were able to successfully convince a significant number of British men and women that Islam was the best option for the monotheistic seeker of truth no longer satisfied with Christianity. By the 1930s, after the opening of the first purpose-built mosque in London, the Qadiani missionaries were able to position themselves as the official guardians of the religious life of Muslims living and studying in London. All this was achieved in spite of the unique and controversial teachings on prophethood and the unorthodox version of the death of Jesus. It has been argued throughout that this was possible because Muslim unity was considered paramount, a point reinforced by Clayer and Germain, who state, 'In the colonial metropolis, students were at the forefront of political activity promoting the idea of international Islamic solidarity'.¹⁰ This has to be considered along with the convert narrative that Islam was not sectarian in the way that Christianity was.

The unanimous accord among Indian revivalist leaders that only a chosen elect, a *jama'at* of the pious, could restore and defend Islam would have the undesired effect of fragmenting the South Asian Muslim religious world into sects competing with one another at precisely the time when unity was most needed. As Indian Muslims struggled among themselves in an increasingly hostile sectarian environment that also drew the Ahmadiyya into the communal strife, in Britain the movement tried to remain clear of these sectarian divisions, even though its own internal schism would be played out in London and Woking. Both groups of Ahmadiyya attempted to play the nonsectarian revival of a universal Islam. It had been central to Ahmad's understanding of his role as the reformer of the age that pan-Islamism was part of a divinely guided mission responding to the unprecedented crises being experienced by the Muslim world.

As stated in *The Muslim Times* in 1935:

The Muslims of the world are not only divided amongst themselves in an unprecedented and hopeless manner, but they seem to have ceased to care everywhere for the vital link of the faith which was meant to unite them. They cannot, therefore do much. It is God who intends now to restore Islam by heavenly means to its true glory not only in the eyes of the world, but also in the hearts of Muslims themselves.¹¹

Yet the WMM's view of pan-Islamism differed from LMM's. For the latter, it was essential to unite behind Ahmad and his movement to achieve the elusive goal of

unity. The WMM was more ecumenical in its outlook. Even as late as April 1964, Muhammad Tufail, the incumbent imam of Woking mosque, was advertising Eid al-Adha, announcing that the prayers would be led by Sayyid Mehdi al-Khorasany, 'the leader of the Shi'ah school of thought in London'. The flyer states that this choice was made 'in pursuance of and to emphasize visually the ideals of Islam in its concept of a world brotherhood of Islam' and in a similar vein announces, 'Let us shed all petty scholastic differences and see Islam in the context of its global mission'.¹² The WMM would deliberately withhold from pledging allegiance to any school of Islam, announcing that it was supported by movements across the Islamic spectrum.¹³ In practice, such ecumenism was also an element of the LMM, especially in the way that Al-Fazl mosque was utilized from 1926 until independence and partition in 1947. This work supports Ansari's view that the networks established in London were not mutually exclusive and that the Ahmadis in London were not considered 'deviant enough' to prevent most Muslims in London, whether converts or foreign activists, or even embassy representatives of foreign Muslim nations, from accepting invitations to attend functions at Al-Fazl mosque.¹⁴

It was this desire to transcend sectarianism that chimed with the British converts and, to a lesser degree, kept foreign national Muslims in Britain content to use the facilities on offer in Woking and South London. Much of this book's content has been intended to establish the evidence to show how the Ahmadiyya in both camps maintained their place as part of mainstream Islam, even though in the same period rumblings of heresy were beginning in various parts of the Muslim world.¹⁵ Islamic sectarianism would become the norm for India's Muslims and for the influx of large numbers of South Asian Muslims, especially from Pakistan, after the collapse of the British Empire, and would change the landscape of Islam in Britain.¹⁶ Ironically, one consequence of this large-scale economic migration was the revival of Ahmadiyya (Qadian) fortunes. Today, the movement claims approximately 30,000 followers, mostly the Pakistani diaspora and their children, and this has been achieved because it has become part of the sectarian terrain that it wanted to avoid. Yet an analysis of how British Muslims strived to avoid sectarian divisions and promote a pan-Islamic ecumenism is an important part of the history of Islam in Britain and arguably strikes a chord with the children and grandchildren of postwar South Asian migrants, who have, in some circles, attempted to argue for a 'British Islam' that transcends ethnicity and sectarian divides.

Sadek Hamid points out that, in the 1980s and 1990s, the term 'British Islam' gained currency, especially in Islamic youth organizations. Hamid describes the term as 'intended to anchor the Muslim praxis with the cultural context of

Britain, and would require Islamic teachings to be indigenized, embodied and communicated within the cultural environment that they [British Muslims] grew up in.¹⁷ He points out that Islamic scholars such as Tariq Ramadan and Abdul-Hakim Murad have attempted to provide a theological underpinning for the idea of an Islam that 'was not only in the West but of the West'.¹⁸ Hamid points out that the converts dealt with in these pages, such as Quilliam, Cobbald and Pickthall, have, in some senses, become iconic figures to a generation that sought an Islam free from ethnic and sectarian division.¹⁹ He could have added Headley and Sheldrake. Yet this attempt to establish ecumenism among Muslims in the interwar period was not without struggle. In addition to being the main exponents of *tabligh* in the period, the missionaries from Ahmadiyya were pioneers of the contemporary challenge of establishing an Islam in Britain that is transferable to a non-Muslim Western post-Christian secular democracy. The Ahmadiyya missionaries were not able to resolve this issue successfully, but the challenges they faced remain familiar. In the obituary for Lord Headley published in *The Muslim Times*, Dard poses a question that he declared was central to his Muslim peer's lifelong attempt to establish Islam in Britain: 'How can the Muslim Faith be "Westernized" so as to bring it into practical touch with the nations of Europe?' Headley's understanding of the essentials of Islam was primarily doctrinal and expressed as 'firm belief in the One God and surrender to His Almighty will, belief in the message divine sent through His Holy Prophets, and the carrying into effect of the highest order of beneficence to all our fellow creatures on this earth'.²⁰ However, this understanding of an Abrahamic ecumenism would exclude Islamic ritual practice and dietary restrictions. Headley had argued:

If you insist on the Yorkshire or indeed any British farmer, giving up his dish of bacon and eggs or his glass of beer – a diet which has been found very wholesome for many generations – and tell him that its continuance is going to jeopardize his chances of salvation, you will fail to convince him of the breadth and sincerity of Islam. If you make it a sine qua non that the business city man is to say his prayers openly, and with the usual prostrations, five times a day, you will not make many converts. What is very easy for the Arab, with his loose and inexpensive garments and ample desert surroundings, will be impossible for the busy city man clad in expensive clothes.²¹

Dard disagreed, commenting:

No true Muslim will ever agree with him in the Westernization of Islam on the above lines. If the British farmers do not worship Bacchus and if the busy city men clad in expensive clothes do not worship Mammon, they can easily make

arrangements for Muslim prayers provided they are otherwise convinced of the beauty and excellence of the Islamic mode of worship.²²

Devout Sunni Muslim converts such as Quilliam, Sheldrake and Parkinson sought an Islam that was adaptable to British life, but not at the expense of Islamic practices that they knew were at the heart of the religion. Some converts would move gradually towards Islamic strictures apparently at odds with British norms, but with the recognition that being a Muslim required adherence to fasting, prayer and *zakat* (almsgiving), and perhaps even dress codes and gender restrictions. Others considered such practices to be cultural and would even argue that they were not found in the Qur'an. For example, at the end of August 1924, during the caliph's visit, a convert named Lawgreave had come to the London Mission and argued with Sayyal that the Ramadan fast, salat, purdah, and polygamy were not obligatory and denied that they were mentioned in the Qur'an. The meeting initiated a consultation committee on *tabligh*, with the caliph presiding.²³ It has to be assumed that the caliph insisted upon an orthodox approach to Islamic practice. Less than a month later, the caliph gathered together some converted women and tried to convince them of the virtues of polygamy and purdah, and robustly defended the practice of men not shaking hands with women.²⁴

These differences in approach would appear to support Ansari's contention that 'in contrast to the indigenous Islam forged by British converts, Muslim networks that consisted primarily of migrants from overseas sought to reproduce expressions of Islamic practices and requirements that were somewhat more rooted in their homelands'.²⁵ The fault lines are revealed between the leadership of the WMM and of the LMM. The latter sought to 'reproduce expressions of Islamic practices and requirements that were somewhat more rooted in their homelands', and maybe this was necessary to convince a growing population of Indian Muslims in London of the orthodox credentials of the Qadiani missionaries.

Another element of possible discord was the motivations of converts. Both Woking and London missionaries used the growing interest in esotericism and Eastern spirituality to seek converts, speaking at Spiritualist, Theosophical and other such gatherings.²⁶ Alex Owen points out that by the 1890s, there was a widespread emergent new spirituality represented by a number of movements seeking esoteric meanings to the world's sacred literature and an 'unmediated experience of the divine'.²⁷ He indicates that these people were, on the whole, educated and middle-class individuals in search of answers to fundamental

questions and no longer convinced by traditional Christian doctrines.²⁸ Not only were such new thinkers the precursors to New Age thought, in that they believed optimistically that a revolution in spirituality would accompany late Victorian scientific and technological development, but many of them also considered the East to possess a 'higher spirituality', and some looked for enlightened or esoteric saviour figures in India and Tibet.²⁹ Chris Partridge calls this new religious phenomenon 'occulture' and demonstrates how this interest in the exotic included the Orient.³⁰ India was perceived as the 'cradle of civilization', and Partridge asserts that if 'a timeless wisdom existed it would have to be conceded in the East' by such seekers.³¹ It has been shown that many British converts were affected by this powerful mixture of the occult and Orientalism. Webb's story illustrates this phenomenon, as do the questions posed by Wragge's wife in the interviews reproduced in the Appendix. Contacts between missionaries and Theosophists and Spiritualists were common in both Woking and London. Quilliam had been a freemason. Islam in Britain would begin to appeal to such an audience, with the added familiarity of Abrahamic monotheism, as opposed to Hindu or Buddhist worldviews.

There were also those who had physical contact with the Middle East and India through travel or service to the empire. In such cases, the motives for conversion may have been different, where real contact with Muslims had been made and were likely to permit a genuine embracing of Islamic practices. Those who came from 'occulture' circles perceived themselves to be modern and more likely to seek a world messiah who brought a rational monotheism. These seekers would also have been in concordance with Ahmad's view of Jesus's death in India. In 1908, Levi H. Dowling published *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, in which he claimed that the 'Akashic records' had revealed to him the true story of the life of Jesus. The work follows Jesus across India, Tibet, Persia, Assyria, Greece and Egypt during the years of his youth.³²

Germain argues that Kamal-ud-Din was someone who found inspiration in the modern methods of promotion used by these emerging new spiritualities.³³ Certainly the Woking missionaries tended to be more tolerant of an idiosyncratic mix of Islamic and British lifestyles, whereas the London missionaries were less convinced, but both would attract individuals with a strong interest in esotericism, prepared to question the strictures of orthodox Islamic practice with a more eclectic cult milieu.

In 1936, Sir Hubert Stewart Rankin, elected as president of the Muslim Society of Great Britain, tried to introduce a motion to disassociate from the Ahmadiyya. The majority of members rejected the proposal, arguing that

Headley and Kamal-ud-Din, both recently deceased, had believed passionately in the 'collective interest of all Muslims in Britain'³⁴ Quilliam had also died in 1935. By all accounts, Rankin was an eccentric figure, described by *The Telegraph* as 'an eccentric remarkable even by the rarefied standards of the baronetage',³⁵ and he eventually converted from Islam to Buddhism in 1945.³⁶ The membership of the MSGB found its Islamic ecumenism stretched by the Ahmadiyya, as well as in defining what constituted Islamic identity. Responding to Rankin, a defence of the British Ahmadiyya movement was made in *The Muslim Times*, probably written by Mubarak Fuelling, stating:

According to its principles, people who enter the fold of Islam, who publicly and openly embrace the religion of the Holy Prophet of Mecca, must do so wholeheartedly and sincerely and must make it the foundation of their lives ... Until a few years ago, the British Muslims were led like sheep in all matters that affected Islam. Today the position of many of them is not much better. Any man coming from the East, affecting a beard, or speaking Arabic, is considered a past-master in Islamic thought ... The result is that when he says fasting is only for those who are in their own country, that prayer is not always necessary, that Islam can accommodate the vices of the West ... the British enthusiast often follows without a murmur.³⁷

With the deaths of Kamal-ud-Din, Marmaduke Pickthall and Abdullah Quilliam in the 1930s, British Muslims lost three of their most skilful practitioners of Islam in Britain, who had been able to translate orthodox Muslim adherence into an early twentieth-century British context without compromising the tenets of the faith. Others were to find it more difficult, polarizing into various camps, orthodox and heterodox. The writer of the same article encapsulates the challenge for British Muslims and unknowingly highlights an issue that remains central to British Muslims today:

Islam was revealed in the East. That, however, does not mean that Britishers can never be pioneers of Islam. The English people do not want Indian Islam, Egyptian Islam, Arabian Islam or society Islam, they want the Islam of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the Islam of Hazrat Abu Bakr, of the Ladies, Khadeejah and Aisha, of the Companions of the Holy Prophet.³⁸

Yet the fact remains that individuals would visit the two mosques and listen to lectures delivered by imams from across the Ahmadiyya divide. They would also attend Eid celebrations and attend lectures by high-profile Muslim visitors. It is probable that each individual convert negotiated his or her response to Islamic belief and practice and thus generated a fluidity that permitted both

formal and informal discussion on how to be a Muslim in Britain. Arguably, the division between the Ahmadiyya ended British Muslim ecumenism, but it may have been replaced by an Islamic pluralism that recognized diverse voices within the community as equally legitimate. Only at the fringes were more hard-line sectarian dogma expressed and functions boycotted. The Qadian missionaries would increasingly represent orthodoxy of practice while simultaneously holding to beliefs that challenged normative Sunni interpretations of prophet-hood. Between these two positions, many converts would establish their individual versions of everyday lived Islam, where ritual practices were challenged in favour of a personal relationship with God regarded as paramount. There were also those who were happy to incorporate practices and beliefs that arose from understanding Islam as a version of one universal or perennial truth.

This tension between 'Islam in Britain' and 'British Islam' echoes the reality of contemporary British Muslim life referred to by Linda Woodhead as a clash between strategic and tactical religion, where the former consolidates around codification and boundary maintenance, while the latter permits individuals to combine the elements of strategic religion with beliefs and practices selected for their applicability to their own lives and experiences.³⁹ If this is the case, then it can be hypothesized that the creative tension between everyday lived Islam as manifested in British converts and the more orthodox prescriptions of the Indian missionaries at Al-Fazl mosque was a precursor to the experiences of British-born Muslims of South Asian origin and the various orthodoxies claimed by South Asian Islamic movements that were exported into Britain in the second half of the twentieth century. In the various motives, responses and adaptations of Islamic belief and practice by British converts, we can see the beginning of what Nielsen describes as 'the individual acquir[ing] more space to manoeuvre independently of the norms imposed by the collective'.⁴⁰ Nielsen argues that this form of 'individualised religiosity' is a characteristic of 'supermodernity',⁴¹ and if his analysis is correct, then the situation in London and Woking in the first half of the twentieth century places the Ahmadiyya at the cusp of modernity and supermodernity and is thus highly significant in understanding religious transformation in Britain.

The balance between Ahmad's two intentions, to establish Islam among the world's Muslims and to bring Islam to non-Muslims, shifted dramatically from 1912 to 1940. At least in Britain in the first two decades of the twentieth century, the focus was on the latter, but as the foreign Muslim population increased and the movement became more embroiled in Indian Muslim politics of independence, the missionaries' attention shifted more to the former. The demography of

conversion shifted after World War I. Theosophy and spiritualism became less significant as spiritual refuges for seekers of truth and alienated Christians. The British public gradually became more secure in its secularism, and those who sought religious answers in the East became enamoured of Hindu and Buddhist esotericism in the late 1960s and of a more 'pick and mix' New Age approach to spirituality from the 1980s. To those who continued the journey through contact with the Muslim world, arguably Sufism became a more appropriate means to bridge esotericism and Islam.

There were a number of elements that permitted the success of the Ahmadiyya missionaries in London. First, they arrived at a time when there was a vacuum within the Islamic mission to Britain. The work done by Abdullah Quilliam in Liverpool had almost completely evaporated after his departure to Constantinople in 1908. However, key converts such as Sheldrake and Parkinson remained alive to the ideal of establishing an Islam for the British people, but for various reasons were unable to establish themselves as Quilliam's successor. They would rally around the efforts of Woking and London missionaries to reorganize British Muslims in London. The missionaries from Qadian, especially Kamal-ud-Din, inspired by the writings of Ahmad, were perceived to be in continuity with Islam as promoted by Quilliam in his writings and lectures. In this respect, the Ahmadiyya mission was able to seamlessly pick up where Quilliam had left off, moving the centre of Islamic mission to the capital city of the empire. Second, the Ahmadiyya were able to gain momentum as missionaries, drawing support from many quarters, even riding a major division in their movement, because British Muslims played down the sectarian divisions within the Islamic world. Establishing two purpose-built mosques would have been considered a magnificent achievement by foreign Muslims in London, especially those from India who shared the ethnicity of the missionaries. The new missionaries were from India, native-born Muslims familiar with the worldview, foods and languages of the voyagers to Britain, trained in classical Islam and able to celebrate the rituals and festivals of Islam in a manner expected of religious leaders.

In the period that they dominated Islamic mission to Britain, it has to be remembered that the missionaries used London as a base to promote Islam in Europe, North America and Africa. Al-Fazl mosque was the centre for training missionaries to be sent elsewhere in the world. In the period when they originated in the Punjab and took the initiative to establish Islam in the West, the Ahmadiyya also attracted the attention of the foremost Western academic scholars of the period. In their analysis, they too would play down the sectarian

features of the movement and describe it as a modern reform of Islam. Titus Murray, for example, wrote:

The Movement initiated by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad occupies a unique position, in relation to both the orthodox party, and the rationalistic reformers represented by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his neo-Mutazalite followers. Ahmad himself declaimed bitterly against the professional *Mullas* of Islam, who kept the people in darkness, who had allowed Islam to die of formalism, who had not prevented its division into sects. He deplored the popular religion of saints, and set himself as a true reformer to restore the true and unpolluted faith of Islam to the followers of the Prophet.⁴²

Kraemer commented, 'They are not concerned with Islam as a religious and political body, but with the spreading of the universal truth. In this respect they are a very remarkable group in modern Islam, the only group that has purely missionary aims'.⁴³ Walter wrote:

It represents a later stage of the reaction to a Christianity by this time established and rapidly winning converts ... it turned eagerly toward a leader who took his stand firmly upon Islam as a revealed religion, as being the supreme revelation of God to man, and allowing no quarter to Christianity pressed forward in unsparing attack.⁴⁴

Finally, the redoubtable and influential H. A. R. Gibb wrote, 'To it belongs also the credit for the development of a modern Muslim apologetic which, though not yet fully able to handle Western technique of argumentation, is far from negligible'.⁴⁵ Each of these scholars identified key elements of the Ahmadiyya, but they did not mention that it was these very features that would be so significant in capturing the zeitgeist of late-Edwardian and interwar London and maintaining the momentum of Islamic reverse mission. Ansari notes that the Woking mosque was able to become a worldwide symbol of Islam in Britain, something achieved only by Quilliam in Liverpool prior to the arrival of the Ahmadiyya missionaries. The London mosque, too, was able to become the official centre for Islam's formal and public presentation in London, and was not superseded until the opening of the East London mosque in August 1941.⁴⁶

In summary, then, the final and perhaps most telling significance of the Ahmadiyya missions in Britain lie in their historical positioning between the influences of the Ottoman Empire on Muslim life in Britain and the arrival of Muslims from the Indian subcontinent after World War II. With hindsight, the historian of Islamic missiology can state that the Ahmadiyya missionaries arrived just as the avenues to conversion and contact with the Islamic world

brought about by the geographical proximity of the Ottoman Empire were in decline, and the rising numbers of Indian Muslims in London and the politics of Empire were creating a new presence that would eventually lead to a Muslim population in Britain of more than two million.

Today the prophetic conviction that 'the Sun of Islam will rise with all its glory in the West' has lost its connection to the statement that 'the Western people shall enter into Islam in large numbers'. Today the prophesy is more likely to be used to explain that the international headquarters of the Ahmadiyya is in London, and from that city they recruit, train and send missionaries out to the world. Yet for a while in the interwar period, they were filled with the conviction that Islam across the world would be rejuvenated from London through the conversion of indigenous British people. Clayer considers that the Ahmadi-Lahori movement played a crucial role in establishing Islam in Western Europe,⁴⁷ but a detailed analysis of sources from the Ahmadiyya archives demonstrates that Muslim converts, students, traders, workers and diplomats who were thrown together in London as a result of Empire were part of a far more fluid community that embraced both divides of the Ahmadiyya movement as a resource.

Appendix

Interview between Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and Professor Wragge, *al-Haqqan*, 6 June 1908, reprinted in *The Review of Religions* (2006), 101, no. 6 (Part 1), and [...] (Part 2). Permission granted by Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 2017, London.

Interview 1

Professor: I am a traveller and a seeker of true knowledge. When a person looks at this world and the creations of this world and the wonders therein and everything that surrounds the universe, a person has to agree that the creator of all of this can't have just made all of this for one community or religion. I believe that God is not one to limit all of this to one religion. I believe that he has made all of this for everyone, whether he is a Muslim, Christian or a Jew.

Ahmad: It is true that God is not only for one community or one religion. The truth of the matter is that God is for everybody. Just as God up brings everybody's body without differentiating and the way he has created all other things that provide for people's bodies such as food and water in the same way he provides for their spiritual life too. This is our belief and this is what the Quran says that God is lord of all the worlds. He always sends and will always send his reformers in every age to every community. The Quran says that there is no township or community in which there has not come a reformer from God. The apparent flaws we see in the books are actually not flaws but rather are why the reformers come, to renew those teaching that people have now considered being flaws. You could compare this to a physician's medicine. As the severity of the illness changes so does the medicine. As people start to progress in their bad deeds and as they start to lead a wrong life this is when people leave God and turn to idol worship. This is when God's honour strikes and he sends a reformer. This is the law of God. Just as for the air, food and water that was in the time of Adam peace

be upon him is not good for us now but the fresh air, fresh water, and fresh food that is now, is good for us. It is essential that the weather and food for us now be different from what it was. It is Gods tradition that he changes the heavenly system according to the need. Just as the rain refreshers the atmosphere, the spiritual rain refreshers us spiritually.

Professor: This is a small world. I believe that there other systems too. I don't believe that the world has only existed since a few hundred thousand years and that Adam and Eve eat a fruit because of which the whole mankind are sinners.

Ahmad: When have we ever said that this is the only place where life exists?

Lack of knowledge does not mean that there is nothing out there. If there is life on another planet and there is a need for Prophethood there then God will definitely send a prophet there too. The second belief that everyone is a sinner is also wrong because the Holy Quran states: *no bearer of burden will bear the burden of another*. It is not at all our belief that life only exists in this small planet.

Professor: I would like to ask two things:

- 1) What is the definition of a sin? A person from a certain place considers something to be a sin and a person from another place might call it a deed. According to evolution man has come this far that he judges others and considers one person to be good and another to be bad.
- 2) What is Satan and if God is the All Knowing then why does he allow Satan to spread his evil?

Ahmad: Life is not only limited to this world but life is eternal. The source of eternal happiness is God. When a person lets go of God be it in anyway whatsoever, this is when he is committing a sin. Then considering the nature of a man, the actions that are harmful to a human those are seen as a sin in the eyes of God. Just as someone who steals he obviously harms someone else but with that he's also damaging his spiritual life.

Just as impure talk is bad for your spiritual life and takes a person away from God because of which, it is considered a sin. Some things are hard for a person to understand but God is the all knowing he knows best what is bad and what is good for a person. He only proposes those things on man that are necessary for him. Just as a doctor knows what the best medicine is to prescribe to an ill person but if he refuses to take that medicine that is his own fault. The sick person should be thankful to the doctor that he wishes the best for the sick person. If God wanted to he could have not told us about the bad things at all because he is lord of the entire world but he did. Just as a sick person must be very cautious of what he eats or drinks and if he

is not that would result in him getting well sooner it is the same spiritually that if a person is not cautious or does not refrain from certain things in the end he would be harming himself. The right way of attaining true purification, true happiness and true comfort is through the love of God.

These are the things that God doesn't like out of respect for himself and if a person does not refrain from them then he would be considered a sinner.

This is also a fact that the things we consider to be a sin other nations also consider a sin. For example other religions consider stealing, lying and adultery to be a sin and all religions believe it to be disrespectful to God and that, it is harmful to human nature. If anybody commits a sin he knows himself that he has done something wrong. If a person hits a child he automatically feels guilty. But when he gives some food to a poor person he naturally feels that he has done the right thing. So it is not hard to identify a sin and there are no disagreements between other faiths as to what a sin is.

As I have mentioned many times regarding Satan that there are two forces in every human. One force is to be pulled towards Good and the other to Bad. The reason being, that when a person is put into a test he decides to do the right thing and through which he receives blessing from God.

Professor: Why does Sin exist?

Ahmad: God does not want vice nor is he happy with it but he has given man the option for both Good and Bad so that he is awarded when he does Good because if there were not bad in the world then there would be no Good either. This should be understood very clearly that if there were not bad there would not be any Good either. What is Good? It is when a person has opportunity or choice to steal but he doesn't or he has an opportunity to commit adultery but he doesn't. So you see that if stealing or adultery didn't exist then Good would not have existed either. So this is the wisdom for creating Sin.

Professor: Christians believe that all of mankind are born sinners and this is why God had to come down again.

Ahmad: We believe this to be false the people that believe in this should answer this question.

Professor: When we look at this world we see that man has gradually evolved into a higher state. But Christians say that man has declined from a higher state to a lower. They explain this by saying that God made Adam and then he committed sin and then the whole of mankind started to decline.

Ahmad: Our belief is not the same as the Christian but rather we agree with your statement.

Professor: I would like to know your thoughts on the hereafter life.

Ahmad: When this world comes to an end a new life starts. Those who have planted bad seeds they will bear bad fruit.

Interview 2

Professor: Do you believe that God has a personality or that he has emotions or do you believe that has no personality but is everywhere?

Ahmad: We do not believe in God to be restricted by giving him a personality or a human body. God is everywhere. We believe that as he is in the heavens the same way he is in the earth. We believe him to have two types of relationships, one that he has with the whole of mankind and the other that he has with his special people. Those people when they purify their souls and they start to excel in the love of God they achieve such nearness with him that it is as though God is speaking from inside of them. The more that person purifies his soul the closer he gets to God.

Professor: If you say that God is love and justice then why is it that one nation only excels when it steps over another? Why is it that one animal eats another? How can this be God's love and justice?

Ahmad: When the word love is used for God people always make the mistake and assume the word to mean the same type of love when used for a human. You should always remember that human love and anger are not the same as God's love and anger. When a human loves somebody he feels traumatized at that person's departing. A mother loves her child dearly; if her child dies she is hurt deeply. But does God feel the same pain? Never. So the word cannot be used for God in the same context. In the same way when a person feels anger he puts himself through a sort of punishment because he starts to feel irritated inside. His happiness and comfort at that time are totally vanished. This is why we cannot say that God's love and anger is the same as a human's. We believe God's attributes to be incomparable. We believe the person who implores for God's pleasure he knows the true meaning of God's love. To say that God is love we do not think it to be acceptable because within the word love it has a meaning of irritation too. We don't find it acceptable to use a word for God that has such cheap meaning.

Professor: Adam was born in less evolved people. Are the Americans also Adam's children and is it true as the Christians say that everybody is born from Adam?

Ahmad: We do not believe that there was only one Adam. There were many Adams. The Quran states: *I am about to place a caliph in the earth*. From the word caliph it is obvious that Adam was a successor to somebody. We do not believe that before Adam there was nothing and that whatever seems to

exist is from this Adam. Neither do we believe that this universe has only been in existence since a few thousand years, we believe that it existed before as well. I cannot say that the Americans are from this Adam. Mohi-ud-din Arabi peace be upon him writes that when he went to preform Hajj he had a vision in which he though he saw Adam and he asked in the vision whether that was Adam. He got a reply that what Adam are you asking for there have been thousands.

Professor: Do you believe in Evolution and if you do then when was the soul created?

Ahmad: We do not believe that we evolved from monkeys. The only way we could believe that is if somebody bought a monkey that slowly evolves into a human. The natural thing today is that a monkey is born from a monkey and a human from a human. Whatever is against this, is fiction. Everybody evolves in their own kind.

Regarding the soul we believe that it is created with the body. I have explained this deeply in my book *Chashma-e-Ma'rafat* (*Fountain of Knowledge*). That's what the Quran says and it is what the doctors say. The creation of the soul starts from the time the sperm enters and starts to grow into a body. The Quran states: *then we developed it into another being*.

Professor: I am very pleased that you beliefs are in accordance with science.

Ahmad: This is why God has sent me to show that everything in religion that is true is not against what is proven through science.

Professor: So would we call whatever is in flies' and other insects' souls too?

Ahmad: There are three types of Souls. Souls of Plants, Animals and Humans. True perfection is in the souls of humans. Souls of animals are on lower level and the souls of plants are at the lowest.

Professor: We believe that man is from God and he does Good so he can get closer to God but if he commits evil is he not forgivable? Is it true that salvation cannot be attained without accepting the concept of atonement?

Ahmad: I believe this belief to be absolutely false. A person attains God by his righteous deeds and through this he attains salvation. We see that in this world a person works hard and then bears the fruit of his hard work just believing in atonement doesn't get him that! God is a forgiving and merciful God and his mercy is for everyone.

Professor: This is the one thing (atonement) that I have never been able to understand that a person can do all the good in the world but he would still not attain salvation until he accepts the concept of atonement!

Notes

Chapter 1

- 1 Humayun Ansari, *The Infidel Within: Muslims in Britain since 1800* (London: Hurst, 2009); Ron Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain: The Life and Times of Abdullah Quilliam* (Leicester: Kube Press, 2010); Muhammad Seddon, *The Last of the Lascars: Yemeni Muslims in Britain 1836–2012* (Leicester: Kube Press, 2013); Jamie Gilham, *Loyal Enemies: British Converts to Islam, 1850–1950* (London: Hurst, 2014).
- 2 For example, David Motadel, *Islam and the European Empires* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); John Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865–1956* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2015).
- 3 Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain 1558–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Matar, *Europe through Arab Eyes 1578–1727* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Matar and Gerald MacLean, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558–1713* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Jerry Brotton, *This Orient Isle: Elizabethan England and the Islamic World* (London: Allen Lane, 2016).
- 4 Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain: 400 Years of History* (London: Pluto Press, 2002); Michael Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism: Indian Travellers and Settlers in Britain, 1600–1857* (Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2006); Fisher, Shompa Lahiri and Shinder Thandi, *A South-Asian History of Britain: Four Centuries of Peoples from the Indian Sub-continent* (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2007).
- 5 Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*; Seddon, *The Last of the Lascars*; and the new release of Peter Clark, *Marmaduke Pickthall: British Muslim* (Manchester: Beacon Books, 2016, originally published 1986).
- 6 Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 380.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid., 133.
- 9 Natalie Clayer and Eric Germain, Introduction, *Islam in Inter-War Europe*, ed. Clayer and Germain (London: Hurst, 2008), 29.
- 10 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*.
- 11 See, for example, S. Lavan, *The Ahmadiyyah Movement: A History and Perspective* (Delhi: Manohar, 1974); F. Robinson, ‘Ahmad and the Ahmadiyyah’, *History Today* 40, no. 6 (1990): 42–47; T. Moles, ‘The Evolution of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the UK, 1913–2003’, unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 2009.

- 12 Fred Halliday, *Arabs in Exile: Yemeni Migrants in Urban Britain* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1992), 28.
- 13 Nile Green, *Making Space: Sufis and Settlers in Early Modern India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 17.
- 14 See Susant Pal, *Imbibed in Faith* (India: Partridge, 2014), 26.
- 15 See Holy Qur'an 54:1–5. This version of the legend is recounted on the official mosque website: cheramanmosque.com/history.php.
- 16 http://www.irfi.org/articles/articles_2101_2150/world's%20second%20oldest%20mosque%20is%20in%20indiahtml.htm
- 17 Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*.
- 18 See R. A. Geaves, 'The "death" pangs of the insider/outsider dichotomy in the study of religion', *The Insider/Outsider Debate: New Perspectives in the Study of Religion*, ed. G. Chrissides and Stephen Gregg (Sheffield: Equinox, 2016).
- 19 Visram, *Asians in Britain*.
- 20 T. W. Arnold, *Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*, 2nd edn. London: Constable, 1913), 8.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 9.
- 22 Reuben Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, 1st edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 39.
- 23 For my first use of this comparative approach, see R. A. Geaves, *Sectarian Influences on Islam in Britain* (Leeds: Leeds University Community Religions Monograph Series, 1996).
- 24 Benedict Anderson, who first coined the term 'imagined communities', argues that what we think of as nations are imagined communities, 'because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 6. Kanno and Norton suggest that the theory can be extended as a tool for the analysis of religious movements. Y. Kanno and B. Norton, 'Imagined communities and educational possibilities: introduction', *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* 2, no. 4 (2003): 301–7.
- 25 Talal Asad, *The Idea of the Anthropology of Islam* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1986). Republished in *Qui Parle* 17, no. 2 (2009): 1–30.
- 26 R. A. Geaves, 'The Borders between Religions: the Challenge to the World Religions' approach to Religious Education', *British Journal of Religious Education* 21, no. 1 (1998): 20–31; and Geaves, 'The Dangers of Essentialism: South Asian Communities in Britain and the 'World Religions' approach to the Study of Religions', *Journal of Contemporary South Asia* 14, no. 1 (2005, Special Edition: Teaching Across South Asian Religious Traditions), 75–90.

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28 Jørgens Nielsen, 'Everyday Lived Islam and the Future of Islamic Studies', *Everyday Lived Islam in Europe*, ed. Nathal Dessing, Nadia Jeldtoft, Jørgens Nielsen and Linda Woodhead (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013), 174.

29 G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (London: Hutchinson, 1949); C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); I. Holloway, *Basic Concepts for Qualitative Research* (London: Blackwell Science, 1997).

30 'Thick description' is described by Lincoln and Guba as a way to achieve a type of external validity. By describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail, one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations and people. (Y. S. Lincoln and E. G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* [Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1985].)

31 R. A. Geaves, 'Teaching and Researching Islam in the UK: The Contemporary Challenges', *Perspectives* 1 (2010): 6–11, Teaching Islamic Studies in Higher Education, HEA Islamic Studies Network.

32 H. Vroom, *Religions and the Truth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 384.

33 Nadia Jeldtoft, 'Spirituality and Emotions: Making a Room of One's Own', *Everyday Lived Islam in Europe*, 87.

34 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 12.

35 Ibid.

36 F. Javier Rosón, 'Daily Life and Conflict in the Albayzín Neighbourhood of Granada', *Everyday Lived Islam in Europe*, 145.

Chapter 2

1 See, for example, R. A. Geaves, 'The Heart of Islam in the Indian Subcontinent', *The Intimate Other*, ed. A. King and R. Stockton (New Delhi: Longman Oriental, 2005), 277–309.

2 See Francis Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture* (London: Hurst, 2001), 12ff.

3 There is considerable controversy over the degree of Akbar's apostasy. Titus notes that the emperor established Thursday evening discussion groups in the audience hall at Fatehpur Sikri to listen to the views of theologians of various religions, including Hindu *pandits*, Parsees and Roman Catholic priests from Goa, as well as learned *maulvis* and Sufis. During these discussions, the very principles of Islam were debated (ibid., 158). He argues that Akbar had come to the point of stating,

'there is no god but God, and Akbar is God's apostle,' but was too fearful to do so (Murray T. Titus, *Indian Islam – A Religious History of Islam in India* [New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1979], 160). Mujeeb is more circumspect. He argues that Akbar had lost confidence in the *ulama* and wished merely to form a body of men who shared his outlook and were willing to attach themselves to him (M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* [London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967], 260–61).

- 4 If there be variance of opinion among the *mujaddids* upon a question of religion, and His Majesty, in his penetrating understanding and unerring judgement should incline to one option ... and give his decree for the benefit of mankind, and for the due regulation of the world, we do hereby agree that such a decree is binding on us, and on the whole nation' (Abdul Qadir Badayuni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, ed. Maulavi Ahmad Ali. [Calcutta: Calcutta College Press, 1869], 70; quoted in Titus, *Indian Islam*, 160).
- 5 Yohannan Friedmann, *Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi: An Outline of His Thought and a Study of His Image in the Eyes of Posterity* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000); J. G. J. ter Haar, *Follower and Heir of the Prophet: Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi (1564–1624) as Mystic*. (Leiden: Van Het Oosters Instituut, 1992); Arthur Buehler, *Revealed Grace: The Juristic Sufism of Ahmad Sirhindi (1564–1624)* (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2011).
- 6 See Arthur Buehler, 'Ahmad Sirhindi: Nationalist Hero, Good Sufi, or Bad Sufi', *South Asian Sufis*, ed. Clinton Bennett and Charles Ramsey (London: Continuum, 2012), 141–62.
- 7 Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 13–16.
- 8 See M. Anwural Haq, *The Faith Movement of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1972), 130; Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 14–16; R. A. Geaves, 'The Symbolic Walls of Deoband', *International Journal of Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 23, no. 3 (2012): 320–21.
- 9 Iqbal described Shah Wali-allah as 'the first great theologian of Islam' (Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband 1860–1900* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982], 36).
- 10 Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 15 and 28.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 12 S. M. Ikram, *Muslim Civilisation in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 261.
- 13 Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, 73–74.
- 14 Ikram, *Muslim Civilisation in India*, 198–99.
- 15 Yousef Ali, trans., *The Holy Qur'an, Sura An-Nur* 24:55. Saudi Arabia: Mushaf Al-Madinah An Nabawiyah, 1992).
- 16 Ikram, *Muslim Civilisation in India*, 263.
- 17 M. A. Karandikar, *Islam in India's Transition to Modernity* (Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1968).

- 18 Ibid., 127.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid., 128.
- 22 Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, 37.
- 23 Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 170–71; Geaves, *Sectarian Influences*, 133–34.
- 24 Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 29.
- 25 Ibid., 134.
- 26 Burjor Avari, *Islamic Civilization in South Asia: A History of Muslim Power and Presence in the Indian Subcontinent* (London: Routledge, 2004).
- 27 Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, 49.
- 28 Ibid., 50.
- 29 Ibid., 52.
- 30 Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, 390.
- 31 Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, 49.
- 32 Ikram, *Muslim Civilisation in India*, 281.
- 33 Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, 47.
- 34 Ibid., 47.
- 35 Ibid., 391.
- 36 Sayyid Ahmad never actually denounced Sufism. He rejected the idea of intermediaries between the believer and God, circumambulation, sacrificing animals except at Eid, burning lights, sanctifying water, consecrating ritual dishes and any form of worship at the tombs of saints. However, he gave initiation into all the traditional Sufi orders but also into the *tariqat – i Muhammadiyya* (the way of the Prophet), which he characterized by external obedience to the Shari'a rather than personal devotion (ibid., 57).
- 37 Ibid., 57.
- 38 Ibid., 52.
- 39 Ibid., 55.
- 40 Geaves, *Sectarian Influences*, 135.
- 41 Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, 61.
- 42 Ibid., 63.
- 43 Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 30.
- 44 Karandikar, *Islam in India's Transition*, 134.
- 45 Sayyid Mahboob Rizvi, *History of the Dar al-Ulum Deoband Volume I* (Deoband: Maulana Abdul Haqq Dar al-Ulum Deoband, 1980), 71.
- 46 Annemarie Schimmel, *Islam in the Indian Subcontinent* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 157.
- 47 Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 27–28.
- 48 Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, 398.

49 See Geaves, 'The Symbolic Walls of Deoband'.

50 Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, 72.

51 M. S. Agwani, *Islamic Fundamentalism in India* (New Delhi: Twenty-First Century India Society, 1986), 17.

52 Lord Dufferin described the Muslims of India as "a nation of 50 million, with their monotheism, their iconoclastic fanaticism, their social equality and their remembrance of the days when, enthroned in Delhi, they reigned supreme from the Himalayas to Cape Cormorin" (Dufferin's 'Minute of November 1888 in Provincial Councils', enclosed with a letter dated 11 November 1888 to Viscount Cross, secretary of state for India, *Letters from Dufferin to Cross, Vol V*, India Office Library).

53 Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 22ff.

54 Ibid., 28.

55 Rizvi, *History of the Dar al-Ulum Deoband*, 76.

56 Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, 72.

57 Rizvi, *History of the Dar al-Ulum Deoband*, 76.

58 Ibid., 75.

59 Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, 72.

60 Ibid., 72.

61 Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 20ff.

62 Rizvi, *History of the Dar al-Ulum Deoband*, 298.

63 Metcalf, *Islamic Revival*, 107.

64 Ibid., 113.

65 Shaikh Muhammad Ismail Panipati, ed., *Musafran-e London* (Lahore: Majlis Taraqi-e Adab, 1961), 184.

66 Syud Ahmad, *Tabyīn al-Kalām fī tafsīr al-Tawrāt wa al-Injīl 'alá millat al-Islām: Preliminary Discourse on the Mohomedan Commentary of the Holy Bible* (Ghazeeore: Published by the Author at His Private Press, 1862); Ahmad, *The Mohomedan Commentary on the Holy Bible: Genesis I-XI* (Allygurh: Published by the Author at His Private Press, 1865); Sir Sayyid Ahmad, *Tabyīn al-Kalām fī tafsīr al-Tawrāt wa al-Injīl 'alá millat al-Islām* (Aligarh: Sir Syed Academy, Aligarh Muslim University, 2004).

67 For a discussion on Ahmad Khan's reinterpretations, see C. W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1979).

68 Shaikh Muhammad Ismail Panipati, *Maktubat-e Sir Sayyid* (*Letters of Sir Sayyid Ahmad*), 2 vols. (Lahore: Majlis-e Taraqi-e Adab, 1976), vol. 1, 413. Ahmad Khan's letters to Nawab Mohsin al-Mulk and Mawlavi Mahdi Ali Khan, written from England, were first published in Sir Sayyid's journal *Tahdhib al-lkhlaq*, under the general title *SafarNamah-e Musafran-e London*.

69 Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 12–19.

70 Ibid., 11.

71 Ibid.

72 Muzaffar Alam, Françoise Nalini and Marc Gaborieau, *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies* (Delhi: Manohar, 2000), 24; Brian Spooner and William L. Hanaway, *Literacy in the Persianate World: Writing and the Social Order* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 284. For a detailed history of Muslims in the Punjab preceding the period under scrutiny, see Muzaffar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab 1707–1748* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986).

73 Gopal Singh, *The History of the Sikh People*, 4th ed. (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1995), 223.

74 Ibid., 384–85.

75 Ibid., 441–503.

76 Kushwant Singh, 'Ranjit Singh (1780–1839)'. *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* (Patiala: Punjabi University); Jean-Marie Lafont, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Lord of the Five Rivers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Singh, *Ranjit Singh: Maharaja of the Punjab* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2008).

77 A similar schema was adopted by S. Lavan, *The Ahmadiyyah Movement: A History and Perspective* (Delhi: Manohar, 1974).

78 See, for example, Geaves, *Sectarian Influences*; R. A. Geaves, 'India 1857: A Mutiny or a War of Independence? The Muslim Perspective', *Islamic Studies* 35, no. 1 (1996): 25–44; R. A. Geaves, 'A Comparison of the Ideas of Maulana Mawdudi (1902–1980) and Shah Wali-Allah (1703–1762): A Pure Islam or Cultural Heritage', *Islamic Quarterly* XLI, no. 3 (1997): 167–86; R. A. Geaves, 'The Heart of Islam in the Indian Subcontinent', *The Intimate Other*, ed. A. King and R. Stockton (New Delhi: Longman Oriental, 2005); R. A. Geaves, 'The Contested Milieu of Deoband: Sufis or Salafis?' *Sufis and Salafis*, ed. Lloyd Ridgeon (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2015), 310–50.

Chapter 3

1 See Geaves, ‘“The Heart of Islam” in the Indian subcontinent’, 286–99.

2 H. A. Walter, *The Ahmadiyyā Movement. The Religious Life of India*, ed. J. N. Farquhar and Nicol Macnicol (Calcutta: Association Press, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1918). A copy can be found online at archive.org/stream/ahmadiyamovement00walt/ahmadiyamovement00walt_djvu.txt.

3 Ibid., editorial preface.

4 Ibid., 7.

5 H. D. Griswold, *Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Mehdi-Messiah of Qādiān* (Ludhiana: American Tract Society, 1902); G. L. Thakur Dass, *The 'Greatest Discovery' Exploded* (Ludhiana: American Tract Society, 1903).

6 'In Memoriam: Mirza Ghulam Ahmad', *The Review of Religions*, VII, no. 7 (1908): 222–31.

7 See, for example, en.wikipedia.org/?title=Mirza_Ghulam_Ahmad.

8 See Kenneth W. Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 115. Jones acknowledges that he based his version of the biography of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad on S. Lavan, *The Ahmadiyyah Movement: A History and Perspective* (Delhi: Manohar, 1974).

9 Walter, *The Ahmadiyyā Movement*, 15.

10 Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements*, 119.

11 *Ibid.*, 115.

12 Mushirul Hasan, *A Moral Reckoning: Muslim Intellectuals in Nineteenth Century Delhi*, 3rd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 91.

13 Marc Lynch, 'Dialogue in an Age of Terror', *Islamic Democratic Discourse*, ed. M. A. Muqtedar Khan (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), 203.

14 Hasan, *A Moral Reckoning*, 137.

15 Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements*, 119.

16 Amatul-Hadi Ahmad, 'A Life Sketch of the Promised Messiah', *The Review of Religions* 1996 and <https://www.alislam.org/library/links/00000185.html>. The author cites Ghulām Ahmad, Muhammad Zafrullah Khan and Munawar Ahmed Saeed, *Tadhkirah: English Rendering of the Divine Revelations, Dreams and Visions Vouchsafed to Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian* (Tilford: Islam International Publications, 2009), 168. The work can be found online at www.alislam.org/library/books/Tadhkirah.pdf.

17 www.ahmadiyya-islam.org/profiles/hazrat-mirza-ghulam-ahmad-of-qadian-as/#Conference_of_Great_Religions.

18 See R. A. Geaves, 'The Sufis of Deoband', *Sufis and Salafis*, ed. Lloyd Ridgeon (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2015).

19 The date is contested, along with the numbers of people who were present with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. As this event took on symbolic meaning among the Ahmadiyya, it became important to find meaning and proof of prophethood in the circumstances.

20 See *Tadhkirah*, 43–50.

21 *The Story of Kashmir* by the Sufi poet Khwaja Muhammad Azam Didamari (1747) claims that the saint Yuz Asaf buried in the tomb was a prophet and a foreign prince. 'Yuz' is linguistically shown to be 'Isa', Arabic for 'Jesus'. The shrine in Kashmir draws increasing numbers of pilgrims and was the focus of a recent BBC documentary.

22 Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *The British Government and Jihad*, trans. Tayyba Seema Ahmed and Lutfur Rahman (2006) (Telford: Islam International Publications, 1900), 11.

23 Ahmad's attitudes towards contemporary Muslim fortunes in India are recorded in detail in Ahmad, *Barāhīn-e-Āhmadiyya*, Part 3 (Tilford: Islam International Publications, 1880 Urdu; 2012 English).

24 A. R. Dard, *Life of Ahmad* (Farnham: Islam International Publications, 2008), 555. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Izala-e-Auham*, Rubani Khaza'in, Vol. 3, 103–5, reprinted in Anon, *The Essence of Islam Volume IV, Extracts from the Writings, Speeches, Announcements and Discourses of the Promised Messiah, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian* (Tilford: Islam International Publications, 2006), 151–52. See also Yohannan Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous: Aspects of Ahmadi Religious Thought and its Medieval Background* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 121.

25 Iain Adamson, *Ahmad – The Guided One* (Farnham: Islam International Publications, n.d., 101–2).

26 Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 172.

27 Ibid., 172–73.

28 Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements*, 116–17.

29 Ibid., 117.

30 'The Promised Messiah and Dr Lefroy' (1902) *The Review of Religions*, I, no. 9 (1902): 368.

31 Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements*, 117.

32 Adamson, *Ahmad – The Guided One*; Dard, *Life of Ahmad* (Farnham: Islam International Publications, 1948; 2008 UK).

33 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 810–20.

34 Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements*, 117.

35 Dost Mohammad Shahid, *Taareekhe-Ahmadiyyat (History of Ahmadiyyat)* Vol. 1 (Urdu) (Qadian: Nazarat Nashro Ishaat Qadian, 2007), 641.

36 www.alislam.org/library/history/ahmadiyya/21.html. Accessed 7 July 2015.

37 Dost Mohammad Shahid, *Taareekhe-Ahmadiyyat (History of Ahmadiyyat)* Vol. 2 (Urdu) (Qadian: Nazarat Nashro Ishaat Qadian, 2007), 165.

38 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 819.

39 Ibid., 820.

40 Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements*, 116.

41 Adamson, *Ahmad – The Guided One*, 216–21.

42 Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements*, 117.

43 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 821–29.

44 Ibid., 822.

45 See *Report of the Court of Inquiry 1954 (Punjab Disturbances 1953)*, Lahore; Samina Awan, *Political Islam in Colonial Punjab Majlis-e-Ahrar 1929–1949* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010), 30.

46 Awan, *Political Islam*, 22–26.

47 See the differences discussed in Muhammad Shoaib Adil, *Munir Enquiry Report*, 2nd edn. (Lahore: Niazamana Publications, 2007), 278–311. 5.

Chapter 4

1 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 8–24.

2 Ibid., 14.

3 See Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *The Star of the Empress* (Lahore: Victoria Press, 1899), 1.

4 Ibid.

5 In the second part of the book, which deals with Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's other book, *Usulut Tafsir (On the Principles of Commentary of the Holy Quran)*, Ahmad presents his criteria or guiding principles for the correct interpretation of the Holy Qur'an (see Chaudhry Muhammad Ali, trans., *The Blessings of Prayer* (Tilford: Islam International Publications, 2007)).

6 Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*, 307.

7 Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Barāhīn-e-Āhmadiyya* (Tilford: Islam International Publications, 1880 Urdu; 2012 English), 81.

8 See Avril Powell, 'Contested gods and prophets: discourse among minorities in late nineteenth century Punjab', *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 38, no. 1 (1995): 40.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., 39. Powell cites Robert Clark, a leading Anglican missionary who was the adopted father of Henry Martyn Clark.

11 Ibid., 39–40.

12 Ibid., 46–47.

13 See H. M. Clark, 'Controversy with Mohammedans', *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, February (1894), 99.

14 A full list of references can be found in a research article published as 'The Scottish Mission of Sialkot – John Taylor: A Research Report', *Mawazna-e-mazahib (Comparative Religion)* January 2013, 27–70.

15 See digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll123/id/78922 for a brief entry on the Reverend John Taylor.

16 Dost, *Tareekhe-Ahmadiyyat*, Vol. 1., 93.

17 Powell, 'Contested gods and prophets', 42–43.

18 Anon, *The Essence of Islam Volume IV*, 114–15.

- 19 Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, 'A Revealed Cure for the Bubonic Plague' (Lahore: Victoria Press, 1898), 1.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid., 2.
- 22 Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, 178.
- 23 Ahmad, *The Star of the Empress*, 3.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Ibid., 4.
- 26 Literally 'uncovering', and applies to a true vision of things that are normally hidden. It usually refers to knowledge through mystical means as opposed to study or learning. See <https://www.britannica.com/topic/kashf> for a detailed exposition.
- 27 Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Izala-i-Auham* (Amritsar: Riyad-e-Hind, 1892), 516.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 See Vivekananda's writings on the East and the West at www.vivekananda.net/PROSE/EastWest.html. Accessed 31 December 2015.
- 30 Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, *Ahmadiyyat or the True Islam*, 7th edn. (Rabwah: Tahrik-i-jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya, 1972), 77.
- 31 Ibid., 78.
- 32 Adamson, *Ahmad – The Guided One*, 12.
- 33 Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Chashma-e-Masihi (The Fountain of Christianity)*, trans. Chaudhry Muhammad 'Ali (2007) (Tilford: Islam International Publications, 1906), 31.
- 34 Ibid., 7.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ibid., 1.
- 37 Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*, 118–20.
- 38 Ibid., 38–39.
- 39 Ibid., 5.
- 40 Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Sirajuddin 'Isa'i Kei Char Sawaloñ Ka Jawab (Four Questions by Mr. Sirajuddin, a Christian, and Their Answers)*, trans. Chaudhry Muhammad 'Ali (2009) (Tilford: Islam International Publications, 1896).
- 41 Ibid., 1.
- 42 Ibid., 37.
- 43 Ibid., 38–39.
- 44 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 341.
- 45 Ibid., 342.
- 46 Ibid., 344.
- 47 Ibid., 538.
- 48 Ibid., 539.

49 A letter written to Queen Victoria and published in the Arabic version (*At-Tabligh*) of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Aaina Kamalat-e-Islam* (Qadian: Riaz-e-Hind, 1892), 157–58.

50 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 343.

51 As in ‘*tahqiqi iman*’. See, for example, askaquestionto.us/question-answer/faith/what-is-the-difference-between-the-imani-tahqiqi-and-imani-taqlidi. Accessed 1 November 2016.

52 Adamson, *Ahmad – The Guided One*, 57.

53 The *mubahala* had come into its own in India during the reign of Akbar, who had brought together religious experts of all faiths in India to discuss their respective truth claims in his court. (See Frank Conlon, ‘The Polemical Process in Nineteenth Century Maharashtra’, *Religious Controversy in British India: Dialogues in South Asian Languages*, ed. Kenneth Jones [New York: Albany Press, 1992], 8).

54 Powell, ‘Contested gods and prophets’, 43.

55 Ibid., 46–47.

56 Ibid., 46.

57 *Nur Afshan* was a weekly Christian paper published in Ludhiana, Punjab, edited by E. M. Wherry from 1873 to 1899. The complete collection is maintained at Forman Christian College in Lahore.

58 *Hindu Parkash* vol. 2, no. 40 (1874): 10–11, published in Amritsar, and *Aftab-e Punjab* vol. 2, no. 39 were critical of the style of attacks on Islam. *Shamsul Akhbar*, 15 October 1875, the official organ of the American Mission published in Lucknow, considered his style of writing to be abusive.

59 See Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 414.

60 Ibid., 414–15.

61 Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Manshur-i-Muhammadi* 6, no. 33 (1872); Lavan, *The Ahmadiyyah Movement*, 32.

62 Ahmad, *Ahmadiyyat or the True Islam*, 94–95.

63 Ibid., 95.

64 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 165.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid., 166.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid., 166–67.

69 Ibid., 166.

70 Ibid., 166–67.

71 Ibid., 167.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid., 543ff.

75 Ibid., 545.

76 Ibid., 542ff.

77 See the trial summary from Captain Douglas reproduced in *The Muslim Times*, London, 16 April 1936.

78 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 546.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid., 547.

81 Ibid., 732–33.

82 Ibid., 733.

83 Ibid., 733–34.

84 Ibid., 734.

85 Ibid., 734–35.

86 Ibid., 737.

87 Dost, 90–96.

88 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 385–88.

89 Ibid., 395.

90 Thakar Das, *Tanqīh Mubāhala* (Lahore: Punjab Religious Book Society, 1895).

91 Powell, ‘Contested gods and prophets’, 47.

92 Ibid., 48.

93 Ibid., 49–50.

94 Ibid., 52. Dard refers to Reverend Clark’s calling the debate a ‘holy war’. It is called ‘the great controversy’ in Robert Clark, *Missions of the C.M.S. in Punjab and Sindh* (London: C.M.S., 1904).

95 Powell, ‘Contested gods and prophets’, 42.

96 *The Essence of Islam Volume IV*, 127–30.

97 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 388–90.

98 Ibid., 398–99.

99 Ibid., 396.

100 Powell, ‘Contested gods and prophets’, 56.

101 Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 551.

102 Ibid.

103 The best text to examine the many prophesies of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in detail is Chaudhry Khan, *Tadhkirah: English rendering of the divine dreams, visions vouchsafed to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian*, revised English edn., trans. Muhammad Zafrullah (Telford: Islam International Publications, 2009).

104 For details of Dowie’s biography, see Percival Serle, ‘Dowie, John Alexander’, *Dictionary of Australian Biography* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1949); H. J. Gibbney, ‘Dowie, John Alexander (1847–1907)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 4 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1972), 95–96; Gordon Lindsay, *The Life of John Alexander Dowie* (Shreveport: Voice of Healing Publishing, 1951);

R. Harlan, *John Alexander Dowie and the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1906); J. Swain, 'John Alexander Dowie: the Prophet and His Profits', *The Century* 64 (1902): 941.

105 Serle, 'Dowie, John Alexander'.

106 Edith L. Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God: A Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism Volume 1 – To 1941* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1989), 33.

107 From Dowie's journal *Leaves of Healing* and reprinted in Adamson, *Ahmad – The Guided One*, 260.

108 See Adamson, *Ahmad – The Guided One*, 260–61.

109 See, for example, *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 3 July 1903, Santa Cruz, California; *The Courier Journal*, 30 June 1903, Louisville, Kentucky; *The Greensboro Patriot*, 1 July 1903, Greensboro, North Carolina; *The Greenville Daily News*, 24 June 1903, Greenville, Michigan; *Rock Island Argus*, 24 June 1903, Rock Island, Illinois; *The St Paul Globe*, 19 July 1903 and 24 June 1903, St. Paul, Minnesota; *The Billings Gazette*, 17 July 1903, Montana.

110 Gibbney, 'Dowie, John Alexander (1847–1907)', 95–96.

111 See Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God*, 31–34.

112 From a reprint of the original Arabic version written by Ahmad published in an English translation entitled 'Dowie and Ahmad', *The Review of Religions*, XXI, nos. 1 and 2 (1922): 68.

113 Ibid., 69.

114 Ibid., 70.

115 Ibid., 71.

116 Ibid.

117 'Agapemonites'. *Encyclopædia Britannica* 11th edn., ed. Hugh Chisholm (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 365–66.

118 There have been several published accounts of the Agapemonites, including a Ph.D. thesis undertaken at the University of Reading in 1994. The main sources are Charles Mander, *The Reverend Prince and His Abode of Love* (Wakefield: EP Publishers, 1976); and Donald McCormick, *The Temple of Love* (New York: Citadel Press, 1962). Also, Kate Barlow (Smyth-Piggott's granddaughter), *The Abode of Love* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2011). The thesis was Joshue Schwieso, 'Deluded Inmates, Frantic Ravers and Communists: A Sociological Study of the Agapemone, a Sect of Victorian Apocalyptic Millenarians' (University of Reading, 1994).

119 'The Abode of Love', Utopia Britannica – British Utopian Experiments 1325–1945. www.utopia-britannica.org.uk/pages/abode%20of%20love.htm. Accessed 27 October 2016.

120 Schwieso, 'Deluded Inmates', 171.

121 Khan, *Tadhkirah*, 567.

122 Ibid.

123 Ibid.

124 Ibid.

125 For example, *Leeds and Yorkshire Mercury*, 13 January 1903; *Cornubian and Redruth Times*, 23 January 1903; *Falkirk Herald*, 28 October 1903.

126 The full prophesy is contained in a letter by Ahmad that was hardbound as an independent publication entitled 'A Warning to a Pretender to Divinity' dated 24 November 1902 and signed 'The Prophet'. Qadian, Punjab, printed by the Artistic Printing Works, Lahore.

127 Ibid.

128 Ibid.

129 Ibid.

130 Powell, 'Contested gods and prophets', 41.

131 Ibid., 53.

132 See Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol. 13, *Kitab-ul-Barriya* (Surrey: Islam International Publications, 1898, reprinted 2009), 305.

133 The advertisement, written by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, went out in 1881. It can be found in English and Urdu under 'Advertisement Publicising the Release of *Barāhīn-e-Ahmadiyya*' in *Majmu'a-e-Ishtiharat* (Compilation of Advertisements) (1971). Rabwah: Alshirkatul Islamiyyah, 29–30.

134 H. A. Rose, *Census of India, 1901, Vol. XVII: The Punjab, Its Feudatories, and the North-West Frontier Province* (Simla, 1902), Para 39; H. Kaul, H., *Census of India, 1911, Vol. XIV* (Punjab, Lahore, 1912), cited in Powell, 'Contested gods and prophets', 39.

135 Nile Green, *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean 1840–1915* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 241.

136 Ibid.

137 Ibid., 19.

138 Ibid., 241.

139 James Gelvin and Nile Green, Introduction. *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* ed. Gelvin and Green (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 14.

140 Ibid., 12.

141 Ibid., 14.

142 Ibid., 13.

Chapter 5

1 See Sophie Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain. An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain 1558–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

- 2 James Gelvin and Nile Green (ed.), *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 11.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Natalie Clayer and Eric Germain, Introduction, *Islam in Inter-War Europe*, ed. Clayer and Germain (London: Hurst, 2008), 12–13.
- 5 For the first biography of Abdullah Quilliam, see Ron Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain: The Life and Times of Abdullah Quilliam* (Leicester: Kube Press, 2010).
- 6 See Muhammad Seddon, *The Last of the Lascars: Yemeni Muslims in Britain 1836–2012* (Leicester: Kube Press, 2013).
- 7 Jamie Gilham, *Loyal Enemies: British Converts to Islam, 1850–1950* (London: Hurst, 2014), 119.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 90.
- 9 See Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*, 166ff.
- 10 See Humayun Ansari, 'Making Transnational Connections: Muslim Networks in Early Twentieth Century Britain', Clayer and Germain, *Islam in Inter-War Europe*, 27ff.
- 11 For an account of an Indian boy brought to Britain by the East India Company and publicly baptized as 'Peter' on 22 December 1616, see Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain: 400 Years of History* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), 1.
- 12 Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain*, 10.
- 13 Humayun Ansari, *The Infidel Within* (London: Hurst, 2009), 29.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Nabil Matar, 'Muslims in seventeenth-century England', *Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 1 (1997): 63–82.
- 16 See Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 5–33, for a detailed account of working-class South Asians in Britain in the Georgian era.
- 17 Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 31–40.
- 18 See, for example, the Cambridge Muslim Association (Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*, 101).
- 19 *Ibid.*, 143.
- 20 Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 31.
- 21 *Ibid.*
- 22 Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 32. Quilliam also recounts visits by high-profile or wealthy Muslim visitors, including Islamic clerics. His imams in Liverpool were from India (Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*, 72–74).
- 23 Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 34.
- 24 *Ibid.*
- 25 Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain*, 34.
- 26 Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 35.
- 27 Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*, 155.

28 Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 30.

29 Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain*, 17.

30 Ibid., 25–26.

31 Ibid., 26.

32 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 11.

33 Fred Halliday, *Arabs in Exile: Yemeni Migrants in Urban Britain* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1992), 52.

34 Unless stated otherwise, all references to Abdullah Quilliam are taken from Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*.

35 R. A. Geaves, ‘The Life and Times of Abdullah Quilliam: British Foreign Policy, Muslim Loyalties and Contemporary Resonances’ *Arches Quarterly* 4, no. 8 (2011): 44.

36 R. A. Geaves, ‘Steamships, Hospitals, and Funerals: Liminal Spaces in 19th C. Liverpool’s Narratives of Transit’, *Tales of Transit*, ed. Michael Boyden and Liselotte Vandenbussche (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013), 165–78.

37 Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*, 101.

38 H. McLeod, *Religion and Society in England 1850–1914* (London: MacMillan Press, 1996), 179.

39 For an overview of the history of biblical interpretation, see Eve-Marie Becker, ‘Gospels Interpretation’, *Dictionary of Biblical Criticism and Interpretation*, ed. Stanley Porter (London: Routledge, 2007), 132–33.

40 William Sachs, *The Transformation of Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 136ff.

41 See Daniel Pals, *Eight Theories of Religion*, 2nd edn. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 19.

42 McLeod, *Religion and Society*, 184.

43 Ibid., 187; Pals, *Eight Theories*, 2–4.

44 Geaves, ‘The Life and Times of Abdullah Quilliam’, 44–55.

45 R. A. Geaves, ‘The significance of the writings of Abdullah Quilliam’, *Victorian Muslim: Abdullah Quilliam and Islam in the West*, ed. Geaves and Jamie Gilham (London: Hurst, 2017).

46 See, for example, W. H. Quilliam, *The Religion of the Sword. An Enquiry into the Tenets and History of Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Liverpool: Dodd, 1891).

47 ‘The Sheikh on Islam and Polygamy’, *The Crescent*, 29 May 1907, 1171ff; *The Crescent*, 29 November 1905, 339–42.

48 *The Balkan Question from a Turkish Standpoint*, published in full as W. H. Quilliam, ‘The Macedonian Question’, *The Crescent* XXII, no. 563 (1903).

49 For example, ‘How to get rid of the bondage of sin’ contained sections on Atonement, the true nature of salvation, jihad and the early Muslim wars. *The Review of Religions* I, no. 1 (1902); ‘Unity versus Trinity’, *The Review of Religions* I, no. 2 (1902).

50 Editorial, *Calcutta Review*, April 1902, cited in *The Review of Religions* I, no. 10 (1902): 390.

51 *The Crescent* no. 157, 15 January 1896.

52 See, in particular, W. H. Quilliam, *The Faith of Islam, An Explanatory Sketch of the Principal Fundamental Tenets of the Moslem Religion* (Liverpool: William Brothers, 1892); or Quilliam, *Studies in Islam* (Liverpool: William Brothers, 1898).

53 *The Crescent* no. 495, 9 July 1902.

54 *Ibid.*

55 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 37; Nasir Ahmad, 'Dr. Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner (1840–1899): Builder of the Shah Jehan Mosque, and founder of the Oriental Institute, at Woking, Surrey, England', *Woking Muslim Mission, England, 1913–1968*, www.wokingmuslim.org/pers/dr_leitner.htm. Accessed 27 October 2016.

56 *The Crescent* no. 684, 21 February 1906.

57 *Ibid.*

58 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 37.

59 *Ibid.*, 100.

60 *The Crescent* no. 679, 17 January 1906.

61 *The Crescent* no. 684, 21 February 1906.

62 *The Crescent* no. 315, 21 October 1893.

63 Achmat Davids, *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap: A Social History of Islam at the Cape* (Athlone, South Africa: South African Institute of Arabic and Islamic Research, 1980), 183.

64 'A Moslem Place of Prayer for London', *The Crescent*, 18 December 1895, 387.

65 See Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 32–33.

66 Sayyid Ameer Khan was a member of the Indian Judicial Committee, Abbas Ali Baig was a member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India as the Muslim advisory member and Abdullah Yusef Ali was a member of the Indian Civil Service and would represent India at the League of Nations in 1928 (*ibid.*, 33–36; 95).

67 *Ibid.*, 37–40.

68 *Ibid.*, 46–47.

Chapter 6

1 Thomas Arnold, 'What the Muhammadan Believes', *The Daily Express*, 14 May 1927.

2 A. R. Dard, 'The Rising of the Sun in the West', *The Review of Religions* (1927) 19–20. Reproduced from a sermon delivered in the London mosque 10 June 1927.

- 3 See Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Izalah-e Auham* Part 2, in *Ruhani Khaza'in* Vol 3 (Surrey: Islam International Publications, 1892, reprinted 2009), 376.
- 4 Dard, 'The Rising of the Sun', 19.
- 5 Ahmad, *Izalah-e Auham*, 376–77, reproduced in Munawir Ahmad Saeed, *Tadhkira: English Rendering of the Divine revelations, dreams and visions vouchsafed to Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian* revised (Surrey: Islam International Publications, 2009), 239.
- 6 Dard, 'The Rising of the Sun', 19, translated from Ahmad, *Izalah-e Auham*, 515.
- 7 Abu Huraira reported: 'The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "The Hour will not be established until the sun rises from the west. So when it rises from the west all people together will believe, but on that day no soul will benefit from his faith if he did not believe earlier or earn good from his faith"' (Sahih Muslim 6:158). Connected to this Hadith is the one referring to repentance. Abu Huraira reported: 'The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Whoever repents before the rising of the sun from the west, then Allah will accept his repentance"' (Sahih Muslim 2703).
- 8 Dard, 'The Rising of the Sun', 20.
- 9 These English-language prophesies appear in Ahmad's first book, *Barāhīn-e-Ahmadiyya*, published in 1883, and occurred in the early 1880s. The important ones are considered to be 'Though all men should be angry but God is with you. He shall help you. Words of God cannot exchange' (554 sub-footnote 4, 123); 'God is coming by His army. He is with you to kill enemy' (part 4, sub-footnote 3, 483–84); 'I am by Isa' (sub-footnote 3, 481–82); 'I love you, I shall give you a large party of Islam' (sub-footnote 4, 556); 'The days shall come when God will help you' (sub-footnote 3, 521–22).
- 10 *Taareekhe Ahmadiyyat* Vol. 2, revised (Qadian: Nazarat Nashro Ishaat Qadian, 2007), 56–57.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 *Malfuzat* Vol. 1 (Rabwah: Nazarate Nashr-o-Ishaat, 1960), 196.
- 13 Letter from the Promised Messiah to the First Caliph dated 13 January 1892.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 The conversion of John White is mentioned in J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India* (New York: Macmillan, 1915), 149. Farquhar states that White visited Qadian in 1890, but Ahmad's letter clearly indicates the date as January 1892.
- 16 *Taareekhe Ahmadiyyat*, 203–13.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Ibid., 213.
- 19 Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Appendix, *The Review of Religions* (Urdu edn), September 1903. Reprinted in 'The Review of Religions: A 100 Year History of the Magazine' *The Review of Religions*, November 2002, 15.

20 Ibid.

21 The first issue of *The Crescent* to advertise *The Review of Religions* was vol XXVII, no. 684, 31 January 1906. The issue of the *Review* advertised was December 1905.

22 Count Tolstoy wrote from Russia: 'The thoughts in this journal are extremely weighty and true'. Martijn Theodoor Houtsma, one of the original editors of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, wrote: 'This journal is extremely interesting', and *The Review of Reviews*, London, wrote: 'Those in Europe and America who have particular interest in Muhammad's [peace and blessings of God be upon him] religion should definitely purchase this journal' ('A 100 Year History of the Magazine *The Review of Religions*).

23 *The Crescent*, 13 September 1903.

24 *The Review of Religions* (Urdu), title page, 1905.

25 *The Review of Religions*, November 1905, 448.

26 *The Review of Religions*, February 1904, 65–66.

27 *Al-Haqm* 11, no. 8 (1907): 9.

28 'A 100 Year History of the Magazine *The Review of Religions*'.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *The Teachings of Islam* (London: Luzac, 1910).

32 'A 100 Year History of the Magazine *The Review of Religions*', 21 and 39.

33 www.mohammedwebb.org/about/. Accessed 15 October 2015.

34 Umar Faruq Abd-Allah, *Islam in Victorian America: The Story of Alexander Russell Webb* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). Also, Brent D. Singleton, ed., *Yankee Muslim: The Asian Travels of Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb* (Rockville, MD: Wildside Press, 2007), which includes Webb's travel journals and lectures in Asia, mainly India, during the autumn of 1892. Articles include Singleton, 'Minarets in Dixie: Proposals to Introduce Islam in the American South', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 26, no. 3 (2006): 433–44; Singleton, 'The Moslem World: A History of America's Earliest Islamic Newspaper and Its Successors', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 27, no. 2 (2007): 297–307; and Singleton, 'Brothers at Odds: Rival Islamic Movements in Late Nineteenth Century New York City', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 27, no. 3 (2007): 473–86. Primary sources include Webb's extensive writings, especially Mohammed A. R. Webb, *Islam in America* (New York: Oriental Publishing, 1893). Duke University has a 'Guide to the Alexander Russell Webb Journals, 1892': library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/webb/. The collection contains Webb's 'Journal No. 1, From Manila to Calcutta' 29 August to 19 October 1892 (142 pp.), and his 'Journal No. 2, From Calcutta to Bombay and Agra' 20 October to 15 December 1892 (144 pp.).

35 As reported in the abridged version of *Islam Our Choice* published by Begum Aisha Bawani Wakf, Karachi, 1970. *Islam Our Choice* was compiled by WMM

and contains the impressions of prominent converts to Islam in the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Part of the text can be found online at www.islamicbook.ws/english/english-057.pdf. Accessed 15 October 2015.

36 See *Taareekhe Ahmadiyyat*, 306–8.

37 *Badr*, 21 March 1907.

38 See also *Taareekhe Ahmadiyyat*, 306–8 and Amtul Bari Nasir(nd), *Biography of Mufti Muhammad Sadiq* (Karachi: Lajna-e-maillah).

39 Yaqub Irfani, *Hayat-e-Ahmad Part 2* (Amritsar: Rast Guftar Press, 1928), 509ff.

40 *Ibid.*, 516–19.

41 Abd-Allah, *Islam in Victorian America*, 105, 116.

42 *Ibid.*, 117.

43 *Al-Fazl*, 29 October 1915.

44 *Ibid.*

45 *Taareekhe Ahmadiyyat*, 310.

46 *Ibid.*, 307.

47 *Al-Haqqan* 11, no. 8 (1907), 9.

48 *Ibid.*

49 *Ibid.* See also *Badr*, 21 March 1907.

50 *Al-Haqqan* 11, no. 8 (1907): 9.

51 Letter written to Mufti Muhammad Sadiq on 9 March 1902 and published in Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, *Dhikr Habib* 2nd edn. (Rabweh: Zia al-Islam Press, 2008), 310.

52 *Ibid.*, 314.

53 For a biography of Wragge, see B. W. Newman and E. L. Deacon, 'A Dynamic Meteorologist – Clement Wragge, 1852–1922', *Weather* 11, no. 1 (1956): 3–7.

54 *Al Haqqan*, 6 June 1908.

55 Newman and Deacon, 'A Dynamic Meterologist'.

56 *Al-Haqqan*, 6 June 1908, and Nasir, *Biography*.

57 *Al-Haqqan*, 6 June 1908.

58 See R. A. Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain: The Life and Times of Abdullah Quilliam* (Leicester: Kube Press, 2010), 73, 114–15, for Quilliam's funding from foreign sources.

59 *Malfuzat*, 451.

Chapter 7

1 Khalid Sheldrake, 'Islam in England', *The Review of Religions* XI, no. 7 (1912): 284–90.

2 Yahya Parkinson, 'An Appeal', *The Review of Religions* X, no. 7 (1911): 301–5.

3 *Ibid.*, 303.

4 Sheldrake, 'Islam in England', 287.

5 *Al Haqam*, 21 August 1910.

6 Editorial, 'To the memory of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din', *The Islamic Review*, L, nos. 1–2 (1962).

7 *Paigham Suh*, 12 September 1956, 2.

8 *Badr*, 19 September 1912.

9 *Badr*, 31 October 1912, 6; *Badr*, 7 November 1912, 2.

10 *Badr*, 9 January 1913, 2.

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Badr*, 31 October 1912, 2.

13 *Badr*, 24 October 1912, 2.

14 *Badr*, 7 November 1912, 2.

15 *Badr*, 19 December 1912, 1. Eid was celebrated in India on 20 November 1912, and it can be assumed that the English celebration in London was close to that date.

16 Wikipedia carries this particular version, stating, 'The Indian lawyer Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, who had just arrived in England, was instructed by Noor-ud-Din, the first successor of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and founder of the Ahmadiyya movement, to establish an Islamic mission in the mosque'. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shah_Jahan_Mosque,_Woking. Accessed 25 April 2016. The entry cites Siobhan Lambert-Hurley, *Muslim Women, Reform and Princely Patronage: Nawab Sultan Jahan* (London: Routledge, 2007), 57.

17 See letter written by Nur-ud-Din dated 22 October 1912 and reproduced in *Badr*, 31 October 1912, 3.

18 'To the Memory of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din', *The Islamic Review* L, nos. 1–2 (1962).

19 See Khan, Muhammad Zafrullah (2014). *Tehdise Nemat or Recollection of Divine Favours* trans. Kunwar Idris. Qadian: Zafar & Sons.

20 *Ibid.*, 26. Chaudhry Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan was one of the pioneers of the creation of Pakistan. He was the first foreign secretary of the newly formed nation, renowned for the drafting of the Lahore Resolution (1940) and for being the first Asian president of both the UN General Assembly and the International Court of Justice. He was a delegate in 1930, 1931 and 1932 to the Round Table Conferences on Indian reforms in London and in 1931–1932 president of the Muslim League. He sat on the British Viceroy's Executive Council as its Muslim member from 1935 to 1941. He led the Indian delegation to the League of Nations in 1939, and from 1941 to 1947 served as a judge on the Federal Court of India (see Wayne Wilcox and Ainslie Embree, *The Reminiscences of Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan* [New York: Columbia University Press, 2004]).

21 'To the Memory of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din'.

22 'There is a very beautiful dome over it, on top of which is affixed a crescent. It has a high pulpit and a *rihal* [low stand] on which is placed a three-volumed copy of the

Quran in large print, having the *Husaini* commentary in the margin. In the *mirhab* the *Sura Fatiha* is inscribed in Arabic. Some small plaques with the Divine names on them are on the walls. There are three or four prayer mats in the mosque. In one corner of the mosque there is some equipment for performing the *wudu* and in the other is a small enclosure for the Imam. In front of the mosque there is a large, open courtyard, within which is a fountain occupying an area one, or one and a half, yards square.²³

23 *Badr*, 27 February 1913, 6–7.

24 Kazi Abdul Haq, 'The Mosque at Woking: A miniature of Mecca in the days of the Pilgrimage' *The Islamic Review* July (1930): 242–44.

25 *The Holy Qur'an*, 3:96–97.

26 *Badr*, 27 February 1913, 6–7.

27 *Badr*, 20 March 1913, 9–11.

28 *Ibid.*

29 *Ibid.*

30 *Badr*, 10–17 July 1913, 3.

31 *Paigham Suh*, 2 September 1913, 3.

32 *Badr*, 2 October 1913, 3.

33 *Badr*, 4–11 September 1913, 3.

34 Haq, 'The Mosque at Woking'.

35 The purpose of the Oriental Institute, founded by Leitner, was to enable visiting dignitaries from India to stay and study in culturally sympathetic surroundings. These students were permitted to pray in the mosque, but Abdullah Quilliam comments that the mosque did not serve the wider Muslim community in London, nor did it celebrate Muslim festivals or carry out Muslim rites of passage (see R. A. Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain: The Life and Times of Abdullah Quilliam* [Leicester: Kube Press, 2010], 263).

36 *Badr*, 6 March 1913, 5.

37 Letter to Mrs Khadev Jung, reprinted in *The Review of Religions* XII, no.12 (1913).

38 *Badr*, 6 March, 1913, 12–14.

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*

41 'Notes and Comments', *The Review of Religions* XII, no. 12, 522.

42 Evelyn Cobbold, *Wayfarers in the Libyan Desert* (London: Humphreys, 1912), 51 and 120.

43 William Facey and Miranda Taylor 'Introduction: From Mayfair to Mecca' (1912), in Evelyn Cobbold, *Pilgrimage to Mecca* (London: John Murray, 1934), 27.

44 See Jamie Gilham, *Loyal Enemies: British Converts to Islam, 1850–1950* (London: Hurst, 2014), 198. Gilham cites Cobbold's obituary, printed in *Paigham Suh*, which suggests that she visited Woking only once, sometime between 1914 and 1919.

45 Lady Cobbold provides a full account of her Hajj experiences and stay in Makkah, in which she is far more forthcoming about her Islamic faith, published as Cobbold, *Pilgrimage to Mecca*.

46 Lord Headley was not the first peer of the realm to convert and be active on behalf of Islam. This distinction belongs to Edward Henry John Stanley, the third Lord Stanley of Alderley (1827–1903), who converted to Islam in 1859 after a career as a diplomat in Turkey and the Middle East and became the first Muslim to sit in the House of Lords (see Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 19–49).

47 Reproduction of the letter sent to Qadian by Violet Ebrahim, 'Notes and Comments', *The Review of Religions* XII, no. 12 (1913): 519.

48 Announced in the Court Circular, *The Times*, 17 November 2013, 11.

49 These remain in publication. Rowland George Allanson-Winn Headley, *A Western Awakening to Islam* (London: J. S. Phillips, 2010, reprint); Lord Headley, *Three Great Prophets of the World* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010).

50 See Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 137–38.

51 *The Islamic Review and Muslim India* 3, no. 1 (1915): 8.

52 *Ibid.*, 9–11.

53 See Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 149–53. For a full biography, see Anne Fremantle, *Loyal Enemy: Life of Marmaduke Pickthall* (London: Hutchinson, 1938).

54 See Humayun Ansari, *The Infidel Within: Muslims in Britain since 1800* (London: Hurst, 2009), 102–5.

55 Marmaduke Pickthall, *Oriental Encounters: Palestine and Syria (1894–5–6)* (London: Collins, 1918), 2.

56 *The Review of Religions* 12, no. 7 (1913): 272.

57 *The Review of Religions* XII, no. 9 (1913).

58 *Al-Fazl* 1, no. 11 (1913): 15.

59 'Our 27th Volume', *The Crescent* XXVII, no. 678 (1906).

60 *Al-Hakm*, 21 August 1910.

61 Eric Germain, 'The First Muslim Missions on a European Scale: Ahmadi-Lahori Networks in the Inter-War Period', *Islam in Inter-War Europe* ed. Nathalie Clayer and Eric Germain (London: Hurst, 2008), 90.

62 *The Crescent* XXV, no. 650 (1905): 403, 413.

63 See, for example, the Anglo-Ottoman Society or British Muslim Society (Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 81–84 and 84–85).

64 *Ibid.*, 129.

65 Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 129.

66 Marmaduke Pickthall, 'The Claim of Islam', *Islamic Culture* VIII, no. 3 (1934): 506–7.

67 The original letter, dated 25 September 1907, is copied in Mohammad Shahid Dost, *Tareekhe-Ahmadiyyat*, Vol. 3 (Qadian: Nazarat Nashro Ishaat Qadian, 2007), 461.

68 Ata ul Waheed Bajwah, *Short Biography of Chaudhry Fateh Muhammad Sial (Urdu)* (Rabwah: Majlis Khuddam-ul Ahmadiyya Pakistan, 2008).

69 *Al-Fazl*, 9 May 1914.

70 Ibid.

71 Ibid.

72 *Al-Fazl*, 27 September 1914, 8.

73 *Al-Fazl*, 4 April 2016.

74 *Al-Fazl*, 27 June 1916.

75 *Al-Fazl*, 29 April 1916.

76 *Farooq*, 7–14 August 1917.

77 *Al-Fazl*, 22 September 1914.

78 *Al-Fazl*, 6 October 1914. Both this entry and the one above were reproduced from August letters.

79 Ibid.

80 *Al-Fazl*, 21 April 1917.

81 *Al Fazl*, 1 May 1917.

82 Mushtaq Luqnavi(nd), *Sadiq Biti* (biography of Muhammad Sadiq) (Lucknow: Co-operative Capital).

83 *Al-Fazl*, 15 and 22 September 1914.

84 The account of Sadr-ud-Din's visit to Liverpool was first published in *Paigham Sulh* (20 October 1914, front page) and can be found at the Woking Muslim Mission's archives, www.wokingmuslim.org/pers/quilliam/sdin-visit-liverpool.htm. Accessed 20 April 2016.

85 *Al-Fazl*, 6 October 1914.

86 *Al-Fazl*, 13 October 1914.

87 See Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

88 See, for example, Pickthall and Quilliam's views on the Ottomans, Abdul-Hamid II and the Young Turks' revolution; R. A. Geaves, 'Abdullah Quilliam (Henri de Leon) and Marmaduke Pickthall: Agreements and Disagreements between Two Prominent Muslims in the London and Woking Communities', *Marmaduke Pickthall, Islam and the Modern World* ed. Geoffrey Nash (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

89 'The Turkish Khilafat and the Ahmadiyya Point of View', *The Review of Religions*, May 1924, 72–74.

90 Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain*, 271–73.

91 *The Review of Religions* XI, no. 2; *Al-Fazl*, 20 February 1915.

92 See Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 80–81.

93 See *Farooq*, 23 August 1917; *Al-Fazl*, 8 March 1920, 15 March 1920, 15 April 1920, 10 May 1920, 22 June 1920, 5 August 1920, 7 March 1921, 18 July 1921, 14 June 1923, 28 August 1923, 15 April 1924, 23 October 1924, 28 October 1924, 18 November 1924.

94 *Al-Fazl*, 15 March 1920.

95 *Al-Fazl*, 8 July 1915.

96 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 141.

97 *Ibid.*, 173.

98 *The Review of Religions* XXXVI, no. 5, 193.

99 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 174–75.

100 Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 134.

Chapter 8

1 Jamie Gilham, *Loyal Enemies: British Converts to Islam, 1850–1950* (London: Hurst, 2014), 126ff.

2 See Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Victory of Islam* (English translation) (Tilford Surrey: Islam International Publications, 2002), 15–16.

3 *Al-Fazl*, 20 September 1914.

4 *Al-Fazl*, 22 September 1914.

5 *Al-Fazl*, 6 October 1914.

6 *Al-Fazl*, 13 October 1914.

7 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 140.

8 *Ibid.*

9 *Al-Fazl*, 4 April 1916.

10 *Al-Fazl*, 29 April 1916.

11 *Al-Fazl*, 20 September 1914.

12 *Al-Fazl*, 6 October 1914.

13 *Al-Fazl*, 9 February 1915.

14 *Al-Fazl*, 27 September 1914.

15 *Al-Fazl*, 4 April 1916.

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Al-Fazl*, 30 October 1914.

18 *Al-Fazl*, 11 and 27 December 1914.

19 *Al-Fazl*, 27 April 1915.

20 *Al-Fazl*, 25 October 1914.

21 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 173.

22 *Ibid.*

23 *Ibid.*, 173–74.

24 See accounts of conversion in *Al-Fazl* throughout 1920.

25 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 174. In *Al-Fazl*, 24 July 1924.

26 *Al-Fazl*, 29 October, 1915.

27 *Al-Fazl*, 11 August and 7 December 1915.

28 *Al-Fazl*, 7 August 1915.

29 *Al-Fazl*, 4 April 1916.

30 *Al-Fazl*, 7 August 1915.

31 *Al-Fazl*, 29 October and 1 December 1915.

32 Mufti Muhammad Sadiq is said to have converted more than 700 Americans to Islam directly and more than 1,000 indirectly (Richard Brent Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003], 124–25, 130). Many of the converts were black Americans, something acknowledged by Elijah Muhammad, the founder of the Nation of Islam (Herbert Berg, *Elijah Muhammad and Islam* [New York: New York University Press, 2009], 18). However, Turner states that Muhammad Sadiq differed from his contemporaries in his belief in racial integration between all racial and ethnic groups in the United States (Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience*, 116). The many Islamic-oriented organizations that sprang up among African Americans in the 1920s and 1930s in the United States were influenced by Mufti Muhammad Sadiq's teachings and turned to his understanding of Islamic concepts. While in the United States, Mufti Muhammad Sadiq published *The Moslem* [now *Muslim*] *Sunrise*, which remains the longest running Muslim publication in the nation, and wrote many articles on Islam in various American periodicals and newspapers. muslimsunrise.com. Accessed 24 March 2016.

33 See the full list of UK missionaries at Bashir Ahmad Rafiq's Personal Website, www.bashirrafiq.com/page7/page9/index.html. Accessed 24 March 2016.

34 Dhost Muhammad Shahid, 'Mufti Muhammad Sadiq: Founder of Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission in the United States of America', *The Muslim Sunrise*. www.muslimsunrise.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=134&Itemid=1. Accessed 24 March 2014.

35 *Al-Fazl*, 5 January 1920, 9.

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Al-Fazl*, 27 September 1914.

38 *Al-Fazl*, 15 August 1920.

39 *Al-Fazl*, 21 June 1920.

40 *Al-Fazl*, 3 June 1920.

41 *Al-Fazl*, 22 July 1920.

42 *Al-Fazl*, 18 November 1916.

43 *Al-Fazl*, 26 July 1920.

44 *Al-Fazl*, 16 August 1920.

45 Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, *Dhikr Habib*, 2nd edn. (Rabweh: Zia al-Islam Press, 2008), 159.

46 *Ibid.*

47 *Al-Fazl*, 10 May 1920.

48 *Al-Fazl*, 7 March 192.

49 *Farooq*, 23 August 1917.

50 Patrick Bowen, 'Abdullah Quilliam and the Rise of International Esoteric-Masonic Islamophilia', in Ron Geaves and Jamie Gilham, *Victorian Muslim: Abdullah Quilliam and Islam in the West* (London: Hurst, 2017), 25–39.

51 *Ibid.*, 39.

52 *Al-Fazl*, 22 June 1920.

53 *Al-Fazl*, 29 September 1914.

54 *Al-Fazl*, 16 October 1924.

55 *Al-Fazl*, 29 April 1916.

56 *Al-Fazl*, 29 February 1924.

57 *Al-Fazl*, 7 June 1917.

58 Sadiq, *Dhikr Habib*, 167.

59 *Al-Fazl*, 13 December 1924, records the meeting as taking place on a dock somewhere in Europe on 11 November 1924.

60 *Al-Fazl*, 2 May 1920.

61 *Al-Fazl*, 7 December 1926.

62 *The Review of Religions* 24, no. 1 (1925): 13–14.

63 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 201.

64 *Ibid.*, 80.

65 *Al-Fazl*, 22 June 1920.

66 *The Islamic Review* 16, no. 3 (1928): 329.

67 *Al-Fazl*, 22 June 1920.

68 *Ibid.*

69 *Al-Fazl*, 18 November 1924.

70 *The Islamic Review* 15, no. 7 (1927): 245–46.

71 *The Islamic Review and Muslim India* 3, no. 1 (1915): 13–16.

72 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 173–76.

73 *Al-Fazl*, 26 January 1920.

74 *Al-Fazl*, 8 January 1920.

75 *Ibid.*

76 *Al-Fazl*, 26 January 1920.

77 *Ibid.*

78 *Ibid.*

79 *Al-Fazl*, 19 January 1920.

80 *Al-Fazl*, 13 January 1920.

81 *Al-Fazl*, 8 January 1920.

82 *Al-Fazl*, 6 April 1920.

83 *Al-Fazl*, 19 August 1920.

84 *Al-Fazl*, 15 August 1920.

85 *Al-Fazl*, 27 September 1920.

86 *Al-Fazl*, 4 October 1920.

87 *Al-Fazl*, 29 April 1920.

88 *Al-Fazl*, 4 November 1920.

89 *Al-Fazl*, 15 March 1920.

90 *Al-Fazl*, 18 March 1920.

91 *Al-Fazl*, 26 April 1920.

92 *Al-Fazl*, 15 April 1920.

93 *Al-Fazl*, 31 May 1920.

94 *Al-Fazl*, 10 May 1920.

95 *Al-Fazl*, 8 April 1920.

96 *Al-Fazl*, 3 May 1920.

97 *Al-Fazl*, 17 June 1920.

98 *Al-Fazl*, 26 May 1920.

99 *Al-Fazl*, 21 June and 26 July 1920.

100 *Al-Fazl*, 10 May and 27 July 1920, contain reports of new missionary activity in each respective nation.

101 *Al-Fazl*, 30 August 1920.

102 *Al-Fazl* 22 January 1921.

103 *Ibid.*

104 Mohammad Shahid Dost, *Tareekhe-Ahmadiyyat*, Vol. 4 (Qadian: Nazarat Nashro Ishaat Qadian, 2007), 252–53.

105 *Al-Fazl*, 22 July 1920.

106 *Al-Fazl*, 24 June 1920.

107 Dost, *Tareekhe Ahmadiyyat*, 147–53.

108 *Ibid.*, 258–59.

109 *Al-Fazl*, 9 September 1920.

110 *Al-Fazl*, 30 December 1920.

111 *Al-Fazl*, 10 February 1921.

112 *Al-Fazl*, 30 December 1920.

113 *Al-Fazl*, 28 August 1923.

114 Dost, *Tareekhe Ahmadiyyat*, 147–53.

115 The Parliament of Living Religions was part of the British Empire Exhibition of 1924, inviting famous representatives of important living religions within the British Empire. The conference was held at the Imperial Institute, London, from 22 September to 3 October 1924. See an account of the conference by William Loftus Hare at opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3779&context=ocj. Accessed 7 April 2016.

116 *Al-Fazl*, 2 September 1924.

117 Sir Theodore Morison served as a member of the Council of India and director of the University of London Institute in Paris. He had a very long association with the Aligarh movement, serving as principal of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College (later Aligarh University) from 1899 to 1905 (G. R. Batho, 'Morison, Sir Theodore [1863–1936]' [Oxford: Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 2004]).

118 *Al-Fazl*, 11 November 1924.

119 The Chattri War memorial to commemorate Indian servicemen who died in World War I is located on the Sussex Downs outside Brighton. During the war, Brighton Pavilion was turned into a makeshift hospital for Indian servicemen wounded while fighting for British forces. (See www.telegraph.co.uk/history/world-war-one/11026562/How-Brighton-Pavilion-became-a-temporary-hospital-for-Indian-soldiers-in-WW1.html. Accessed 7 April 2016.)

120 *Al-Fazl*, 27 September 1924.

121 *Al-Fazl*, 16 October 1924.

122 Reproduced in *Al-Fazl*, 27 September 1924.

123 *Ibid.*

124 *Al-Fazl*, 30 September 1924.

125 *Al-Fazl*, 7 October 1924.

126 *Al-Fazl*, 30 September 1924.

127 *Ibid.*

128 *Al-Fazl*, 14 October 1924.

129 *Al-Fazl*, 30 September 1924.

130 The first issue of *The Review of Religions* was published in London on 15 October 1924.

131 *Al-Fazl*, 23 October 1924.

132 *Al-Fazl*, 11 November 1924.

Chapter 9

1 'Islam in London', *The Crescent*, 16 December 1896, 1128; 'Editorial Notes', *The Crescent*, 13 January 1897, 25.

2 'Editorial Notes', *The Crescent*, 19 October 1898, 233–34.

3 See Jamie Gilham, *Loyal Enemies: British Converts to Islam, 1850–1950* (London: Hurst, 2014), 125.

4 See Humayun Ansari (ed.), *The Making of the East London Mosque, 1910–1951. Minutes of the London Mosque Fund and East London Mosque Trust Ltd.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

5 Humayun Ansari, *The Infidel Within: Muslims in Britain since 1800* (London: Hurst, 2009), 134.

- 6 See 'The History of the Islamic Cultural Centre', London Central Mosque Trust and Islamic Cultural Centre, <http://www.iccuk.org>.
- 7 Mohammad Shahid Dost, *Tareekhe-Ahmadiyyat*, Vol. 4 (Qadian: Nazarat Nashro Ishaat Qadian, 2007), 147.
- 8 *Al-Fazl*, 16 November 1926, reports articles from *The Sunday Herald*, 3 October 1926; *The Referee*, 3 October, 1926; *The Liverpool Courier*, 2 October, 1926; *The Daily Chronicle*, 2 October, 1926; *The Star*, 2 October, 1926; *The Daily Mail*, 30 September, 1926; *The Daily Chronicle*, 13 September, 1926; *The Western Daily Press*, *South Wales News*, 30 September 1926; *The Near East*, 13 September, 1926; *The Daily News*, 2 October, 1926.
- 9 *Al-Fazl*, 9 November 1926.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 *Al-Fazl*, 20 November 1926.
- 12 *Al-Fazl*, 2 November 1926.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 *Message of Peace*, 10 November 1926.
- 15 *Al-Fazl*, 2 November 1926.
- 16 For the full account, see Asif Basit, *London's First Mosque: A Study in History and Mystery – Part 1 of 2*, www.reviewofreligions.org/6651/londons-first-mosque-a-study-in-history-and-mystery-part-1-of-2. Accessed 20 April 2016.
- 17 India Office Records, British Library Political and Secret Department File IOR/L/P/11/270.
- 18 *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 October 1926.
- 19 'The New Mosque for London', *London Evening Standard*, 23 September 1926.
- 20 'First Mosque in London', *The Times*, 2 October 1926.
- 21 'London's Voice from the Minaret', *The Daily Chronicle*, 4 October 1926.
- 22 *The Times*, 25 November 1926.
- 23 *Message of Peace*, 10 November 1926.
- 24 *Al-Fazl*, 2 November 1926.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 'Arabia comes to Wandsworth', *The South-Western Star*, 12 July 1935.
- 27 Dost, *Taareekhe Ahmadiyyat*, 147–53.
- 28 Ibid., 147–53.
- 29 *Al-Fazl*, 17 July 1921.
- 30 'New Muslim Journal', *The Times*, 9 July 1935.
- 31 Reprinted in *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 4 (1935): 8.
- 32 'Notes and Comments', *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 1 (1935): 1.
- 33 *The Muslim Times* 2, no. 11 (1936): 1.
- 34 *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 26 (1936): 2.
- 35 *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 14 (1935): 1.

36 *Ibid.*, 5.

37 *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 16 (1936): 3.

38 'Sir Muhammad Iqbal and the Indian Government', *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 3 (1935): 6.

39 'Maulana Shams Welcomed', *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 21 (1936): 7.

40 *Ibid.*

41 Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer (1864–1940) was lieutenant governor of the Punjab from 1912 until 1919. O'Dwyer endorsed General Dyer's action regarding the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. In 1940, at age seventy-five, he was assassinated by Udham Singh (Philip Woods, 'Profile of Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer [1864–1940]', *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004]).

42 Edward William Macleay Grigg, First Baron Altrincham (1879–1955), was a British colonial administrator and politician. From 1925–1930 he was governor of Kenya. Grigg, the son of Henry Bridewell Grigg, a member of the Indian Civil Service, was born in Madras. Grigg joined *The Times* in 1906 as the head of the colonial department (Kenneth Rose, 'Grigg, Edward William Macleay, first Baron Altrincham', *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*).

43 Major General Sir Percy Zachariah Cox (1864–1937) was a British Indian Army officer and colonial office administrator in the Middle East. He was one of the major figures in the creation of Iraq (Philip P. Graves, *The Life of Sir Percy Cox* [London: Hutchinson, 1941]).

44 'Eed Celebrations at the London Mosque', *The Wandsworth Borough News*, 13 March 1936.

45 William Rubinstein, 'The Secret of Leopold Amery', *Historical Research* 73, no. 181 (2000): 172.

46 See Jason Tombs, 'Lloyd, George Ambrose', *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; and Deborah Lavin, 'Amery, Leopold Charles Maurice Stennett (1873–1955)', *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

47 'Id ul-Azha in London', *The Muslim Times* 2, no. 19, 1.

48 William Malcolm Hailey, First Baron Hailey (1872–1969), known as Sir Malcolm Hailey from 1921–1936, was an administrator in British India. He was governor of the Punjab from 1924–1928 and governor of the United Provinces from 1928–1934. He created India's oldest national park, named Hailey National Park in his honour (John W. Cell, *Hailey: A Study in British Imperialism, 1872–1969* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992]).

49 'Muslim festival at Southfields', *The Wandsworth Borough News*, 26 February 1937.

50 'London Mosque reception', *The Muslim Times* 2, no. 25–26 (1937): 2.

51 'Visitors to the London Mosque', *The Muslim Times* 2, no. 5 (1936): 2.

52 'International Assembly at the London Mosque', *ibid.*, 3–4.

53 Jaswant Singh, *Jinnah India-Partition-Independence* (New Delhi: Rupa, 2009), 203, records that the lecture took place at the mosque but does not account for Dard's involvement. The lecture was covered in three newspapers: *The Sunday Times*, London, 9 April 1933, *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 8 April 1933, and *Madras Mail*, 7 April 1933. See also Amaar Ahmad, 'The Return of Jinnah 1934', *Pak Tea House*, pakteahouse.net/2011/10/05/the-return-of-jinnah-1934/. Accessed 2 May 2016.

54 *Al-Fazl*, 1 January 1955.

55 *Al-Fazl*, 14 May 1941.

56 Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 239.

57 *The Review of Religions* 51 (1957): 415, cited in Gilham, *Loyal Enemies*, 239.

58 Peter Clark, *Marmaduke Pickthall: British Muslim* (London: Quartet Books, 1986).

59 See 'Muslims of London: A Brief Historical Overview: The Tudor to the WW2 Period', British Muslim Heritage website: www.masud.co.uk/ISLAM/bmh/BMH-IRO-historical_overview.htm. Accessed 24 April 2016.

60 *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 10 (1935): 2.

61 Ibid.

Chapter 10

1 Humayun Ansari, 'Making Transnational Connections: Muslim Networks in Early Twentieth Century Britain' in *Islam in Inter-War Europe*, ed. Natalie Clayer and Eric Germain (London: Hurst, 2008), 27.

2 Nile Green, *Terrains of Exchange: Religious Economies of Global Islam* (London: Hurst, 2014), 20.

3 Ansari, 'Making Transnational Connections', 27.

4 Green, *Terrains of Exchange*.

5 Ibid., 5.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., 26.

8 Ibid., 25.

9 Eric Germain, 'The First Muslim Missions on a European Scale: Ahmadi-Lahori Networks in the Inter-War Period', in *Islam in Inter-War Europe*, 90.

10 Natalie Clayer and Eric Germain, 'Introduction', *Islam in Inter-War Europe*, 24.

11 *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 9 (1935): 2.

12 Flyer to advertise Eid al-Adha, 23 April 1964, produced by the Shah Jahan Mosque, entitled 'There are no sects in Islam – The Festival of Adha'.

13 See *Islamic Review* XIII, no. 3 (1925): 84.

14 Ansari, 'Making Transnational Connections', 52.

- 15 By the 1930s, several fatwas had been issued in Egypt and India declaring the Ahmadiyya as being ‘outside the pale of Islam’ (see Germain, ‘The First Muslim Missions’, 102).
- 16 For a recent mapping of this sectarianism, see Sadek Hamid, *Sufis, Salafis and Islamists: The Contested Ground of British Islamic Activism* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2016).
- 17 *Ibid.*, 100.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 101.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 ‘Lord Headley’, *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 4 (1935): 6.
- 21 *Ibid.*
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 *Al-Fazl*, 27 September 1924.
- 24 *Al-Fazl*, 21 October 1924.
- 25 Ansari, ‘Making Transnational Connections’, 62.
- 26 See Germain, ‘The First Muslim Missions’, 97.
- 27 Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 4.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 4–5.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 5.
- 30 Christopher Partridge, ‘Orientalism and the Occult’, *The Occult World* ed. Partridge (London: Routledge, 2015), 614.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 611.
- 32 Such works subscribe to the theory that Jesus only passed out on the cross. Mainstream Christian historians have disputed the theory. David Marshall Lang presented evidence on how confusion in diacritical markings in Arabic texts transformed *Budhasaf* (Buddha-to-be) into *Yudasaf*, *Iodasaph* and then *Yuzasaf*, also confusing Kashmir and Kushinara, the place of Buddha’s death (David Marshall Lang, *The Wisdom of Balahvar: A Christian Legend of the Buddha* [London: George Allen & Unwin, 1957], 45) The Swedish scholar Per Beskow, also concluded that these theories misidentified traditions about Gautama Buddha in the *Bilawhar wa-Yudasaf* legend as being about Jesus (Per Beskow, *Jesus in Kashmir: Historien om en legend* [Stockholm: Proprius, 1981]). Beskow updated his conclusions in English (Beskow, ‘Modern Mystifications of Jesus’, *The Blackwell Companion to Jesus* ed. Delbert Burkett [Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2011]).
- 33 Germain, ‘The First Muslim Missions’, 97.
- 34 Jamie Gilham, *Loyal Enemies: British Converts to Islam, 1850–1950* (London: Hurst, 2014), 204.
- 35 H. Massingberd, H. (ed.), *The Daily Telegraph Book of Obituaries: A Celebration of Eccentric Lives* (London: MacMillan, 1995), 72–75.

- 36 *Who Was Who*, 1897–1990, Vol. 8 (London: Black), 624.
- 37 *The Muslim Times* 1, no. 16 (1936): 4.
- 38 *Ibid.*
- 39 Linda Woodhead, ‘Tactical and Strategic Religion’, *Everyday Lived Islam in Europe*, ed. Nathal Dessing, Nadia Jeldtoft, Jorgens Nielsen and Linda Woodhead (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013), 20.
- 40 Jorgens Nielsen, ‘Everyday Lived Islam and the Future of Islamic Studies’, *Everyday Lived Islam in Europe*, 172.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 172–73.
- 42 Titus Murray, *Indian Islam* (Oxford: Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, 1930), 223–24.
- 43 Hendrik Kraemer, ‘Islam in India Today’, *The Moslem World*, 21, no. 2 (1931): 151–76.
- 44 H. A. Walter, *The Ahmadiyya Movement* (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1918).
- 45 H. A. R. Gibb, *Whither Islam? A Survey of Modern Movements in the Moslem World* (London: V. Gollantz, 1933), 215.
- 46 Ansari, *The Infidel Within*, 134.
- 47 Germain, ‘The First Muslim Missions’, 118.

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